

March/April 1977

Theatre Australia

Diane Cilento
Anthony Shaffer
Interview

Vol. 1 No. 8

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Australia

AUSTRALIA'S NATIONAL PERFORMING ARTS MAGAZINE

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THEATRE AUSTRALIA is published by Theatre Publications Ltd., 7 President Place, New London Heights, New South Wales 2205 (Tel 040 529881) on the 15th of every month. It is distributed by subscription and through theatre buyers etc., by Theatre Publications and its representatives throughout Australia by Gordon and Gersh (A) and Ltd., MULLOURE STREET, Sydney. Printed by Murray & Beith Printers Pty. Ltd., 18 Bedford St., Melbourne 3000. It is registered as 2283 Newstead NSW. The publisher and their agents accept no liability for loss or damage which may occur. Unsolicited manuscripts and correspondence will not be returned unless accompanied by a stamped addressed envelope. Opinions expressed in signed articles are not necessarily those of the Editors. The publishers accept no responsibility for advertisements placed in the magazine for which neither art-work is not supplied.

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Cover: Diane Cilento in the Queensland Theatre Company's *The Taming of the Shrew*.



Interview with Diane Cilento and Anthony Shaffer (above), Page 5.



The Doll Trilogy - Review Page 10, and artwork.



Australian Opera, Page 52



The Queensland opera: Scene Page 52.

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Comment...

People have by turns been outraged, wildly enthused and left wondering what all the fuss has been about, by our last magazine's satire on Our basic point, you will recall, was that it's high time more of the promotional money went into good product—artistic plays (both together, optimally). Lately entrepreneurs of various shades have been spending fortunes on imported things and whatever one may care to say about the increased range of choice this provides our audiences, it still persists regrettably to our aged cultural cringe.

Yes, it's good to see Sheila Hancock and Peter O'Toole (largely at least), and it will be good to see the Chichester Company under Keith Michell. Welcome home to him, and David Northern (whose polished accents are so informative on the London scene for the A.B.C.).

An entrepreneur complained to us that our carping against such visitors was petty, an influential producer that it was "childish and insulting", they fill theatres, they fill them with quality—and isn't that what it is all about? Certainly. Some form of internationalism is a useful cultural aim and achievement. But let the buyer beware nevertheless.

Australian plays and Australian accents erupted onto the stage in the late '60's—for a brief time—while they could effectively be pushed as viable (even enjoyable!) because they were our own. Part of the push that had made that possible was a reaction to the absolute domination of our theatre scene by English Artistic Directors, English texts (even for the *Devil*) and not infrequently English casts.

Some sort of battle was engaged. Voices demanded Equity make sure, and enforce rules excluding outsiders—to enable locals first right to show their wares. Australian directors got jobs and prominence. Australian plays were included with all the appearance of normalcy in the museum display programming of the leading subsidised companies.

But the battleground now looks to be in a stage of siege. And still our indigenous culture is outside the gates. Inside—by far the majority of Artistic Directors in our top companies are English, and some prominent Australian directors are left out in the cold of unemployment. Most of our state companies are favouring their way into 1977 with first-up offerings of texts from the U.S., past and present. When equity tries to enforce its rules protecting locals by insuring equal numbers of Australians be included, the letter but not the spirit is followed, Australian born, but regular London performers, are imported too as the home contingent.

Our most pervasive commentators—of Max Harris reply to John Bell's sign definitely that, of course, the trouble is we haven't got the training here (I'd as well try and despair that in caring about the barest talent. And, they add, our life style is simply not the



Douglas Fairbanks, Jr., as seen by National Times cartoonist Ward O'Hall

stuff of which drama is made.

So it's time perhaps for the fight to begin again. For the siege lines to be broken so we can engage again.

Think of the gains of pushing the local product. It's a marketing question (we asked John Singleton to answer that one for us but he's too good at doing it to need to bother). The more you push it, the greater supply of quality product you'll have to push.

You have to tell the people that Williamson, de Groen, Hewett, (and the cheapocracy of Hewett) Hibbert, Dunn, Blair, Spear, Pyrene and Battye, are good, that Bell, Blundell, Olsen, Livermore, Fitzpatrick etc., etc., are what they want. And you'll have to tell that cynical little whisper that nags you with its "but do they?", simply to shut up while you get on with promoting a star system of our own. Because at T.A. we are unequivocally confident in what they do want—and they've got to find out as they did about Shoppie Conditores, Revere, T.A.A. and the all Australian Export Cola.

The artists of the community have things to say to the community because they live in it and they know what makes it tick (such insight!) And artists all have a burning desire to entertain. Now all of that is something communities like very much. We aren't being patronising about the great Australian G.P. but given that this is the age of The Advertiser, the rules are that communities have to be told and told with confidence.

So bravo, Douglas Fairbanks Jr., we mean no personal slight. And you Mr. Jay that think you offer can be an amiable one. It's not that we're too international a community, it's not that we're too parochial a one. The trouble is that we're not enough of either. We would dig the international much more, paradoxically, if we became a lot more parochial.

All the eternal truths from the romantic to the scandalous are running round in our little parish—unfortunately of late our theatres have stopped looking for them here. Which could mean we've stopped looking for external truths, too.... Ah, well.

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Theatre Publications Ltd gratefully acknowledges the financial assistance of the Arts Grants Advisory Committee of South Australia, the Australia Council, the Literature Board of the Australia Council, the New South Wales Cultural Grants Board, the Queensland Cultural Activities Department, the University of New South Wales Drama Foundation, the Victorian Ministry of the Arts, and the assistance of the University of Newcastle.

ANNIVERSARY TOAST

I'm obviously very pleased to get the Critics Award for *A Tour to Melbo*. Perhaps the most pleasant thing about it for me is that this has happened exactly ten years since I wrote *After with Miss Mabel*, so it makes a neat double *Anniversaire* that decade is being celebrated at Melbourne University who did the original production of *After with Miss Mabel*. They're doing a season of my plays including *Blackbirds*, and *After with the President* (a *A Tour to Melbo* but I think *The Overcoat* is one of the best things I've ever done, and much more obviously than *Mabel* which obviously has more popular appeal). The Frank Rattazzi party cultural is an extension of our policy of bringing some popular style of play into the community, like *The Hole Family Show* and *Quagmire* for Light House directly involving a full scale tour because we feel it's an exemplary production and performance. Jack Hibbard.

AMERICAN TAKE-OVER

In Australia we read the filth of people who are doing first class things as opposed to second class things. So often we are labelled off with second class. I don't believe we should stay there, we go on in any form, any of the line very



That's what's wrong with America. They should not close the doors to English and Australian artists. We've all got to feed off each other. However we mustn't let the cameras be used as a stepping ground for anything less than first class things. I like understanding them wanting to see what this country is potentially. That's why people are always just here. I went to the Moon Festival in Sydney last for a very small fee. It was very exciting, but I don't think people that want them more want him for, I don't think they saw beyond the excitement of listening to people talk about Broadway. I saw it is a bunch of hand held men, standing to see what this country had to offer them.

Well, we have a beautiful theatre, and I liked and thought "I wonder if you're thinking of this place in a possible value for something you wish to launch in the hope that the money could be partially provided for them. It's a very clever thing to include if you can, because the money is being up at America and Britain. And I thought "Oh, perhaps I'm accepting things if we can look in that brilliant talent, but I don't want that brought here if it means we're going to get up a lot of what is current to other people." I feel they really come in as if they did make a decision to move in, how else it would be for them to do so.

Major Christoph

LUCKY STARS

J. C. Williamson's *Prostitute* stars Frank Robinson on the production of *The President* and *After with Miss Mabel* which recently ran the season performance at Melbourne's one of our own Actors Theatre. The show which had been conceived, written, directed and performed by John Gough, Caroline Gough and John O'May will merge under the J.C.W. banner at Her Majesty's, Melbourne on Sunday April 19th. It is the first time in 25 years that J.C.W.'s managing director Kate Bradshaw, but taken over a largely written or produced show like this, he is hoping to arrange for an original cast members of the show as well as possible. He also indicated that he is considering touring it to other Australian cities of a later date.

"I think this show is a world class, it has the same sort of entertainment value of something I saw at Broadway last year ago. An evening with *Miss Mabel* and *After with Miss Mabel* has melody, music and music, the three ingredients for a success, and this has been proven at the Armitage, an Off Broadway type theatre with people coming in for seats and over a thousand turned away. I can believe to arrange this much needed theatre. To maintain the economy we are building the stage but the audience get into the girls and will play all part of the theatre. In that way the theatre will not about every hundred. I consider the members of the cast are three of the most talented people in Australia, they are undoubtedly stars of tomorrow. It is a show like *Cats* or *Southside 1345* by *John* and *Wendy* on the same night. *The President* and *After with Miss Mabel* is the biggest little show in town."

Kate Bradshaw

QUOTES AND

TROUNCING THEM IN TAREE

WITH THE TOTE TOURING TROUP

It's been going very well. Opening night was stunning and wonderful, everyone was excited. We opened in Taree in a pretty dreadful place, the school hall, where we had great difficulty getting in to rehearse, so it was a very day and all the children had to play in there. That was one of our best houses so far though, along with Grafton where we opened a new High School Hall, it was full and we made lots of money. We've been amazed and pleased to find that there's been much better response from the smaller towns than the big ones in attendance for a national appreciation of the show, perhaps because they are much lower towns in general. One problem has been that we've been doing *Melba* Hare, and the school I think, we've done the school and people have been coming to us only when they haven't been able to get in to the hall. But it's been well and truly wonderful. The school are really enjoying the demands made on them at both the play, with no free actors and so many parts and the demands of all the different characters and situations. We're extremely greatly underappreciated, but after the first week we've got very efficient and professional at getting the set in and out. John Hare, Manager of the A.T.C.P. (The Australian Touring Project).



LETTERS TO

Dear Sir,

There is really very little truth in the rumour that *Anniversaire* don't want to see Australian. We have proved that with *Sam Long* (New Year) it is perhaps better the truth to say that most commercial producers don't want to see Australian.

The most significant thing, the main audience will undoubtedly think that Australian actors are not competent to take the star parts and the more difficult it will become to sell Australian actors on a commercial basis. So let us stop importing overseas actors in second rate plays and promote Australian actors in first rate plays.

Walter Melville

Dear Sir,

Through a great oversight I failed to mention by name the message titled supporters of *After with Miss Mabel*.

The sheer theatricality of the two shows, as well as the imaginative use of the puppet, make, in great part, to the talent of Alan Hightail, Joe Galloway, Joy Greenhouse and Greta MacIntyre. It's their blood that flows through the puppet's veins.

Roger Patten,
Canberra, A.C.T.

Dear Sir,

Reading John Synge's article in the *Sun* (1st Feb) about the Melbourne Theatre Association, it would appear that the question belongs to that group of so-called intellectuals who absolutely refuse to see any sort of criticism which does not carry any social or political message. He denigrates entertainment just for the sake of entertainment and indulges in the tedious pastime of holding up the most boring various aspects of the matter (in, and then out, "bureaucratic", "bureaucratic", "bureaucratic") and all the other tired old clichés that the student subjects and the parental revolutionaries use to gladden and so frequent.

One of the reasons for the success of shows such as *After with Miss Mabel* and *Quagmire* is that they deliberately cater to the theatricality of people. *After with Miss Mabel* Average. Some of us are people standing there two verses are only being sung once. They carry a happy, relaxed "happy" atmosphere, lots of laughter and no social comment! They are out for that "late night's entertainment", and they certainly don't share Mr Synge's delusions about the meaning of the entertainment, a social aspect which tends to be so peculiarly obvious to him.

QUERIES

REGIONAL RENEWAL

"Last year we had to find a hand to smooth matters. The Board gave the go ahead for each production only after the previous one had opened. Our grant for 1977 (\$22,000 from the Australian Council) and \$20,000 from River South Water government enable us to plan a season of plays in a central venue in Newcastle—last year we were 10,000 out of town at the University (without) then generally we wouldn't have got started! We are preparing four plays with a linking theme (Rip's tale of a mad identity), one of three another world pieces by John O'Donoghue, and we are touring the state with an Australian double bill. Our aim for the year is to increase audiences, to increase membership and to increase our community work, principally in schools. Under community director Michael Caulfield the list is in good hands."

Terence Clarke
Artistic Director Hunter Valley Theatre Company

OUT OF CREATIVE WATERS?

The A.P.C. *Cost Festival* in 1977 and what will that mean for its future? The Melbourne based group who has created works like *Hotbed*, *Parade*, *Williamson* and *Gabriel*, has had Maxine's (in *Costume for Living*) K'Knee playing in Perth—to lead actors (one a 261) and the group—over to *Willy Family* (live playing in Adelaide) to show Maxine's new *From Factory* back home in dock. The most frequent comment about touring performances these weeks is to: they look like fishes out of water away from the stage waters of the From. Should they put get back there and keep doing what they've done before, come home out of local waters, and develop rough new ways of doing—both of which can be fed have been subsequently pushed by others?

FOR SERVICES TO THEATRE

The OGB was a complete and utter revelation—a wonderful culmination in over 30 years in the theatre. But then doesn't mean it is going to stop! It's actually searching for a new one woman show. This time, several of my friends, women artists, will work with me. Lady Woodcock, Mary Daniels, and Rose Bracken. Together we want to do something with the same warmth and spirit as *When River Sings*."

Rea Farrell, now OGB Officer services to Australian theatre.

AUSTRALASIAN PAPERS

The annual AU LLA (the U is for Union) on the L is for Language and Literature) conference was held earlier this year in Wellington, New Zealand. A Mexico-Australia connection, Mark Thornhill gave a paper on the Australian scene, topics discussed ranged through classical to Harold and the Chinese, performances were offered at Auckland, at some German Universities, and of a play by P.2 playwright Craig Harrison. Joseph Marquise from *Boiler*—and

by the way, his *Boiler* and *Boiler* will be done by the Old Time last this year and Jennifer Gordon became involved in an unusual relationship about player girls and their relationship to their local theatre scene.

NOT THE THEATRE CAPITAL?

There are a whole lot of reasons why Canberra, the country's capital, doesn't have a resident professional theatre company—like and healthy among of them, it could certainly support one, after all Hobart does. But in many ways we are in a fortunate position here—in the moment one of the few companies who can do the job (as shown). I get the best of both worlds, professional experts and all the creative life so other.

It is hoped for a union to impact a professional body ruling on the theatre, it is not both actors and technicians. Actors are, and have been since time immemorial, capable of improvisation; they have a need to act, whether they are paid or not. And it is absurd that a professional technicians can't do a company by having him operate equipment during a show, Union rules make artists into technicians—without technicians too little.

Ross MacGregor, Director Canberra Repertory Theatre.

ON THE WHITE TRACK



A new play from Australia's most down-patched theatre would be a terrible inclusion in any theatre season. With well made productions of *Parous* with a big tape something there is that is making his reason to playwright after an eleven of fourteen years.

The new play *Big Top* is a comedy of manners, or the best of them. It's a Point Piper apartment with a wife who dabbles in politics, a husband who dabbles in law and a writer who is encouraged to dabble in both, the play with its inside the private life behind the public scene of Sydney's very special world of actual art.

In the company I look forward to reviewing some actual comedies, particularly from Queensland, and also my collaboration with Ross Thomson who will return from London to oversee the stage design."

John Thomson

THE EDITOR



Admittedly, much of the work that is done is but the personalities and comic attitudes of the members of both companies make up for old guys and good reactions, and the stock which which have all made him. The people who take it John has nothing for them and it is a great time of life.

In *Boiler* shows—*Boiler* is a change from the first old forms, however, perhaps the group, then we need support the person by putting our backs on other ways."

My I point out that Mike & John have consistently put both in time over the last 10 years—it is not possible that coming to the G.P. has put them back on those ways."

One of the many reasons that the G.P. won't go to the theatre is that over the years, they have been either ignored, or treated like children who must be protected as to what they should like or dislike. If there is going to be a revival in this country then attention must be paid to all sections of the community, who will, we hope, make all the mistakes.

Let us reason that place like the *Thym*, *Tragedy* & *The Last Laugh* are, have opened. Yes we should see a change from the first old forms—but an alternative style, not a replacement, but a breath of social comment and

eventual should be an alternative to theatre of entertainment—comprehending, but not replacing it.

In conclusion, I suggest that Mr. Smyth does a little honest self-analysis into his reports for writing critiques. Organized he may be—*Queen* (James) he is not!!
Yours faithfully
John Pagar
Brisbane, Victoria.

Dear Sir,

May we ask what is it that La Roche Theatre, Brisbane, out of all the amateur theatres in Australia, is the only one that gets serious notice of its productions?

When Theatre Australia came into being, I thought the policy was to consider only professional theatre. It seems to me a list of who you know.

The fact is La Roche's standard is not high—on amateur theatre go—and your own own full stage theatre of this sort is a real sort of amateur as to the professionals of the sort. Getting out of it
Lady Jeany Lang

Spotlight

ACTORS' NEWS

Brian Spencer, John Murrell, Sandra MacGregor, Peter McFarland, Richard Phillips, Peter Collingwood, Stanley Wilson in the Old Totea *MacGregor* (John Clarke directing).
Sandra Gere, Irene Jessart, Susan Chilton, Edward Haysle, Barry Hall, Bruce Myles, Frank Thring in the M.T.C.'s *School for Scandal* (Ray Leader directing).
Brian Jones, Kevin Myles, Edwin Hodgkinson, Christine Day, Doreenly Wilson, Anne Fordellbury, Ruth Crawford in the S.A.T.C.'s *Cherry Orchard* (Colin George directing).

Frank Wilson joins infam TV - two Terry Downes in the M.T.C.'s production of *William* (unfiliated). *The Club*.

Lyndell Rowe is off to Brisbane to play *Doctor In Love*.

Reynaldus Pini recently in Toronto, is off to the Tasmanian Theatre Company for *Sound of Music* and *Shantel*.

Norman Kays in *The Fall Guy* at the M.T.C. *Shane Dawson* is doing the *Glenn Dawson Show* at Music Loft in July.

Don Graham sticks on the boards - with Wallace Saxon, Brian Holmes in *Comet* and *Classmate*. *Diana Grotzinger* is the new Jodel in the long running *Barry Hynes Show* (now 12 months in Melbourne). Jo Kelly. Ray recently performed the production the best R.H.C. of many he's seen around the world.

New entry in Perth's Playhouse - Les Burt from Melbourne and Les Roberts from Sydney. And *Carole Gurnett* is opening in Wellington's The Department there this month.

DIRECTORS' NEWS

Robert Grotzinger is directing for the Old Totea *Alan Ayckworth's* *101 Day The Woman Company* which will be on offer at the Sydney Opera House. *Rumour* has it Grotzinger himself is being sought for the Tom Courtenay role.

Ken Hensley, critic with the Canberra Times will direct *Don Ross* for the Canberra Opera. They're just moved into new premises - the Y.W.O.A. Centre, with a significant for rehearsal space. Perth's John Myles was to, but had an arthritis.

George Malley was involved last month in a workshop/reading at Canberra House. London for the Association of Australian Artists. We are told by the A.A.A. that it is recognised by the Australian High Commission as being the Official theatrical group of Australians in the U.K. (South).

Ruth Mitchell will lead the prestigious *Chuchew Theatre Company* as a tour of Australia next year - starting with the Perth Festival (the revised the latest *Bala Shropes* (see J.C.W.) is organising it. The two plays are offered by the Apple Cart and *Chuchew*. Will Mitchell play the Music? Or legal? Or both?

New Director of Youth Activities at Brisbane's Twelfth Night Theatre *Jonathan Baxter* from New Zealand. Production *Lloyd Nicholas* is now with the Q.T.C.

Australian's Memory Theatre-1977 and present includes *Brook's* *Thyestes* and *During John Power's* *The Last of the Knickerbockers*.

Adrian Pascoe's *Melba* and *Goodbye*, and New Zealand *Wells*, Robert Lane's comedy *John Hely*. Among the personal listed is sometime M.T.C. director and actor *Jonathan Hardy*.

NOT ON A HIGH

DIANE SILENT came home with an ANTHONY SHAFER world premiere Theatre Company. RICK BILLINGHURST, Artistic Director of La Boite, morning after.



A World Premiere From the pen of the man who brought us *Shuff!*! The Queensland Theatre Company presents Englishman Anthony Shaffer's *Without Words*. also renamed by its original title: *For Years I Couldn't Wear My Black*. "It was really a try-out. Yes . . . a try-out. But it's more poetic to call it a 'World Premiere'." Shaffer himself is talking. With him is Diane Silento, our own star of stage and screen in the marquee of the Q.T.C.'s theatre where the night before the try out opened.

"Yesterday, before the curtain went up . . . in the afternoon . . . we had a rehearsal. We were making changes then," said Diane. She had made the trip out in advance of the play itself, representing Shaffer with the Q.T.C.'s Joe MacCormac (Hawkins), in a kind of dressing for the event.

"I had brought out from London a tape recording that we'd made," said Diane. "We'd made it of the whole play - to see what didn't work. It's the way a lot of people in America now do it." I think Ned Simon would be proud to see that. The result will be the play's next director - when it is done in London.

"I think that he . . . Joe MacCormac . . . he had a problem," offered Shaffer. "Because the play, basically, when he got it, was not in the right shape. He had very little time."

Shaffer did not sit out Silento and vice versa in the play-only shortly before the play opened. He wanted to be fighting a real rehearsal to look ahead, inspection or script at all - certainly in any particular detail. Diane was naturally more ready to embrace upon the play - about what she termed "the central dramatic structure." But he clearly didn't want her reference to rehearsal on director MacCormac.

"He changed the script after a lot of staff had been already blocked and moved. . . . (Perhaps it could not be expected enough in the time to accommodate the changes we made. Under the circumstances, he did not sit well."

What about the cast? Both are in agreement. Shaffer: "I think they did remarkably well considering."

Gilbert: "I do, too. I think they did very well."

Considering? Anthony Shaffer himself is standing. "I think it's very difficult for a cast doing a play of the kind which usually has right rose between the light and the dark, between comedy (and) the serious. It's difficult being able to prefigure it with an audience when they don't know the length of a laugh, when they don't really know quite what weight a more thoughtful scene might have. . . . (then, the cast are slightly in the position of having to back off."

Then played Diane Silento, talking about audience and about the Q.T.C. theatre where in a quiet event she played the lead in the *Thru* of the *Shrew* a couple of years ago. "Yes-

HORSE

under her arm for the Queensland
and her and the author the



Last night the audience really had control over the actors—because they, the actors, just didn't know where the laughs were coming. That was very odd.

"One thing I have noticed—the at certain spots of confidence is limited. You know, they come here after work ... and the play did rub a long time. One's got to guess how much an audience can take. That really means laughter—at certain getting the gag." All in all, the evening seemed something less than a total success. She looked toward her. "And there's something else. This theatre, I must admit, is like someone's belly who hasn't eaten for three days. Instead of being someone in control, it's strange there to play in. Actors have to play it all very hard, because you seem to be busy from the audience in a funny way. And this is where that should really be quite near the audience. In rehearsal we were often surrounded by how good the effect was. We went close up, then."

"Was it too long last night?"

"That was an agreement again—"Yes?"

"What are you going to do about it?"

Shaffer repeats the question. Dore responds with an enigmatic "Ah-h" that leads into a theatrical laugh.

I asked Shaffer about the play's origins, where it fitted in the writer's development. The successful writer was still unsure. "We said it's a little early ... it's possible when there's some by the fact that we've just done it here for the first time. It was written some time ago—and



G.T.C. production of For 'Treason I Doedn't Wear My Black ...

recently it was rewritten."

"Where, then, does it go from here?"

"We are going to do it in London. There is a suggestion we don't at Greenwich—we've had an offer to do it there. Whether we do go there, or take it straight to the West End, or transfer from Greenwich to the West End ... we're not absolutely certain."

"The playwright's other plans?"

"I like plays of manipulation ... but I think I'm going to try to make them less heavier burdens in the future than this. This is quite a light piece. And I'm doing a light piece in London. But ... in some difficulty to stay close to what you personally want to go. Look at writers. I can look back and see a pattern in my work. There is sometimes a desire to break that pattern; there is sometimes a desire to go further with the same pattern. It's a little vague. I know that a jump has to be made—a leap, a leap has to be made. But in which direction? It's not absolutely certain."

"There was really no planning that

Dore Ekins talked about her trip home to work with the G.T.C.—and particularly has

last night as an actor."

"When you come into a Company from the outside, when you've been doing things on your own, there's a tendency for actors to think you're going to be very much as on your high horse." A high horse did not seem something Mr. Ekins was in the habit of riding. "They think you'll meet them in somehow a different way. You have to overcome that, immediately—so that they know you're an actor too ... on the same level as them, in the same box as them ... and that you're all working together on the same stage."

What of her future plans? In fact there's a remarkable writing speed going apart from establishing her own reported community in North Queensland and directing Shaffer's play in Queensland, she's got two films in the pipeline—one here and one in England. She's also been commissioned to write a play from the Koori short story festival in Australia. But unless Shaffer she was careful not to spend too much on talking about what might be ahead.

Yes, the future ... I'll think about the future ... tomorrow."



— See Don Bachelder's review Page 18

ARTS for the DRINKING MAN

by Don Mackay



Don Mackay

It was an accident really. Two actors and a stage manager from the Players Caravan were out doing a schools tour of Victoria with an Australian history/literature programme, "The Great Australian Historical Exhibition". One night, after dinner at the Bradford pub, the stage manager started playing guitar and the rest of the bar joined in the songs and asked for requests

"What do you blokes do for a job?"

"Actors!"

"In Bradford?" (surprisedly)

"Yeah, playing at the High School tomorrow"

"Why don't you do a bit of a turn for us?"

So the three went performed, with inter-related songs and occasional boasts to run out to the bar for more.

Blindfolded (over-rehearsed) to make (the pub) more a special occasion than the local for (theatre) "good class family entertainment back to Bradford". And an idea was born.

Along with other theatre people I talk high-mindedly about getting out among people and reaching new audiences, but it wasn't until a few years later when I went to the Victorian Arts Council that I realised that the natural meeting place in country towns, the local pub, had never been utilised by the Arts Council, or anyone very much but rock bands.

So we started to reimagine the Australian material for pub drama and called it *The All Australian Pub Show*.

The two actors from the Bradford pub—Gary Gray and James Wright—were prepared to try it near Melbourne. Helen, who had previously been stage manager was on tour with Spike Melton so two Australian folk veterans were recruited—Peter McDonald from Mulga Girl's Bicycle Band and David Jones from Bushwhackers and Bullockies Bush Band.

It was astonishing how the original historical source material—Mark Twain's, Henry Lawson's, Anthony Trollope's, the *Magpie* and those well-known writers Trud and Acker—worked well with pub

audiences, when put in the form and played in a relaxed style. The success of the first Kelly trial became a definite highlight of the evening and a strong contrast to the lighter material which preceded it.

Mavis was selected from a wealth of current songs, Bush Ballads, jokes and so on. More formal songs were used for a repertoire.

The Pub Show went out on a six week tour of Victoria in May of 1976, but due to the demand was extended twice.

It had been a happy breakthrough to new audiences. The fact that the pub usually sold out well ahead and frequently asked for return visits (because that was just for getting something right).

It hasn't replaced the regular Arts Council programme in Victoria, but mostly complements such tours as *The 19th Family Show*, *Canadian Music Theatre*, *Victorian Stage Opera*.

The 1977 tour began on February 17 in Melbourne and to five weeks in Queensland. It will visit Tasmania, South Australia and play yet another season in Victoria between now and September.

The show is an interesting development in another way. The four artists are playing two school programmes during the day while on tour. The actors are playing the original second act school programmes and the musicians are Australian folk music show.

Here's a toast to the All Australian Pub Show! Cheers! (And what's more it doesn't need any kind of subsidy!)



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QUEENSLAND ARTS COUNCIL

THE ALL AUSTRALIAN PUB SHOW

Garrie Hutchinson

ONE ALL AUSTRALIAN PUB SHOW (performer) desired and directed by Garrie Hutchinson. PERFORMERS: GARY GRAY, DAVID HORN, PETER McDONALD, JAMES WRIGHT.

Having just had the somewhat chastening experience of producing a couple of shows at the Great Street Theatre, a dubious venue at best, and at a rather time of year (January, February), the argument over audience versus art has a particular poignancy for me. Dorothy Heenan's *The Gaiety Girls* and *Alice de Gram* (Cloddy played to a total of about 3,000 people. That's not very good), and whether or not it's the fault of our direction, or the plays, it's rather disheartening to think that there isn't an audience in a city the size of Melbourne for theatre men slightly off the beaten track. I'm sure the experience of the Australian Performing Group last year will tell that tale as well. It's gotten to the stage where artists are not a subsidy from some government at all, but, or have made a hobby, professional production is well nigh impossible. I'd calculate the last pub show at about \$10,000 when done properly. Consequently, it's back to the sensitive, fragile, and venerable La Mama.

If that is the case, then it makes the discovery of any formula for success a veritable philosopher's stone. And the finding of it profitable for none.

One such formula was discovered here by the APG with the *1950s Family Show*—which is still being shown in Adelaide and Sydney as a bank against unemployment within the group. The formula involves the use of old vaudeville routines, sometimes in a subtly, sometimes as a crude juggling act, sometimes, mental magic, dancing, stand up set-down comedy, anything at all. This simple, practical rough theatre causes some sort of cultural remembrance in those too young to have seen the originals, which exists with the nostalgia of those who did in an atmosphere of good humoured family teasing.

Aside from the 1950s and *Some Space* Young 90s, it has been the *1950s* restaurant shows that have ruled in so the general idea. Not only the standard maid full potter show, or villain having melodrama, but shows such as *Crackers at the Soap* recently seen at the Last Laugh. The *Stuffy Binkies*, a perpetration of this sophisticated vaudeville—used a bit of spirit, a bit of camp and some superb vocal movement ideas as in their *Black and White Show*. This was so simple and so pointed that it is one of the best achievements of any kind of theatre in Melbourne of the last few years.

But taken of that cover it was. Even the gentle mockery of the *1950s Family Show* has quality, not necessarily in the technique, but in the class itself, and in the quality of performance that makes it something special.

Looking at the current range of productions in this general line, there'll have to be some disappointment with the way old formulae are repeated, and the way they're taken. But they all seem to be popular, which says something.

Take *The All Australian Pub Show*, devised and directed by Don Mackay. This has one innovation, which is that it is currently touring back home. It would be great if the Arts Council were sponsoring this tour were to keep the current tour for cities with which might like to make up country entertainment—Bass Strait, for instance.

The show itself seems to be a remarkable format: short of a bunch of songs—Australian in theme, and some reaching from old times. The singing, by Don Horn and Peter McDonald is excellent, and the recitations by Gary Gray and David Wright do the job humorously enough. The same I'd put with it is not only that it seems to misinterpret Australian personalities about Poms, Salvos, Red Kelly, booze, but then it's rather dull. In the end if it were just a singing, that'd be fine but hardly necessary. It tries to tap some of the comradery and mateship of the pub, but misses the opportunity of dealing with the pub as an institution of importance. The peripheral material that is used is imitative and amusing, but doesn't make a willing listener. A pub show that used the vast range of jokes and stories about

drinking might have made for an interesting shift on anything for that.

So, the *Pub Show* as it stands is hardly enough to arrest anyone it is performed to up in the bush, given the special circumstances of its performance. That is, when it's performed it will be a special occasion. I don't think it could stand much of a chance on the purely commercial public domain on the city.

The *Pub Show* works well enough on its low key market because it has kept close to audience focus to pull it through. The *Love Affairs* (plus, *Shower* at the Last Laugh) isn't. It only lasted a fortnight, and was a major disappointment in those of an aspiring big thing from *Heaven*. The music by Don de Jong was terrible and unrelatable, the writing boring and pretentious. I don't know that I am as disappointed by the vaudeville/music hall that I can't accept an update of vaudeville—it is just that the particular show isn't very good.

It deals with the cover of the *Good Gaiety*, a *Love Affairs* (only also originates from *Heaven*) Germany to Australia. She has come with *Heaven*, as *Max West*, with a punk outfit, and an All Gaiety line person. There is a narrator and a female character of a sort. The less said about all that, the better. *Shower* might have had a better chance, or at least the idea might have had a better chance, in a theatre. As it stands it is not good, and also inappropriate to the Last Laugh.

So perhaps I'll get back to using the golden formula. Certainly *Alan* is one of vaudeville, it does fairly well, and the nostalgia musical, *The Pioneers* and *All That Jazz* is low. Academic doesn't prefer these kinds of shows, where the material is gentle amusing and safe, to anything else. They seem to prefer the known in any form (David Williamson or George Gipe) over *Don* Gipe to the unknown. Maybe there's a theme, but I don't think a unique future for the theatre as a whole. Without an audience for the unusual there inevitably won't be an audience for anything.



James Wright, David Horn, Gary Gray & Peter McDonald

ERIC GARE

HATS

Raymond Stanley

as masterful masters of show bits and filled bill— including their management team—have performed the best selections of their own choosing in a showcase for their talents. Eric Gare, who is presently her personal Ray Lawrence, the Lindsay Young Company and Let My People Dance is just as proudly presenting this new answer for public consumption.

Apparently Miss Rita May and her company of 125 are making the world tour of a vaudeville house at Madison's Palace, by making the main transfer. Playhouse has been booked. Undisputed Rita comes on with just the two assistant waitresses, Ray Chaffin and Corinne Mann. But Miss May has over-embellished her stage entrance, and the two are forced to perform the entire show on their own. Rita does make brief personal appearances. A string line here, an arm there, her costume shows in all its glory, and she is in a flash alone she is thrown across the stage by Chaffin (a mistake for Mann).

The waitresses are mediocre and limited entertainers, repeating their tricks again and again, presenting the contents of gags and bits across throughout. So the audience shall not forget what a noble job they are going to make. "The show goes on," every few minutes comes the reminder of Rita's slapstick style, in all the big numbers—despite huge built-up the star fails to appear. The understudy who finally do their individual show in big slapstick numbers. Mann performs a song and dance some act makes her "tender" and Chaffin—was making the big fall in—repeats the same number in drag. He even does a shocking impersonation of W.C. Fields. And so the show proceeds. It really is only a 10-minute act followed by a more serious extended beyond all limits.

Mann and Chaffin are a nice couple with overlapping. They play their parts in the double—to get on of their present show. They display few real acts that their singing, dancing or singing is little more than competent. Neither appears to be a natural comic, nor boasts much original

and personality. Maybe in ten years, with the minimum of luck and much exploitation, they will be at the Lyric and Queen's. But on present showing, not now. Nearly everything is over done, every point covered, every effort. Even their mediocrity can have some substance.

The two have in themselves an impossible task. No doubt they believe they are displaying something all they really show is a constant one level mediocrity. To indicate they are talented and not merely presenting themselves, proof is required of the level they can reach. An embellished outfit, when shown in audience has no great doubts about, possibly can get away with it. There is too much in the one strain would be a bore.

There is one happy moment at the end of the evening—completely out of context—when the duo sing Songbook's "Anyone Can Whistle." It really is as far as their has gone before that they have been able to sustain a second half devoted to a medley of songs and straight numbers, with perhaps some patter and dance numbers one may have noticed from the theatre converted one had seen their talents in the making.

One has no wish to denounce two advertising agencies who have been brave and stubborn enough to do their own thing. And in fairness one must repeat most of the first night audience appeared to adore their antics, laughed and loved and constantly applauded. It is just possible that, back on Madison. The variety shows audience will be easily satisfied with the two presented and give their support. Naturally there will be line for Mann and Chaffin, providing they refuse they more never present such a line again and even time must really provide proof of variety— which means keeping in better and more experienced and signed song writers.

When all is said, surely a show which consists of two unknown performers delivered by two mediocre backed by a 4-piece orchestra, playing 42 minutes in the first half and 35 in the second a combined in 65-80 a just?

NOTE: A. Reynolds, music director, written and copyrighted by Ray Chaffin and Corinne Mann. A. Reynolds, music director, written and copyrighted by Ray Chaffin and Corinne Mann. A. Reynolds, music director, written and copyrighted by Ray Chaffin and Corinne Mann.

Presenting the end of last year the young and entertaining Corinne Mann and Ray Chaffin and the Playhouse for three nights and before



Corinne Mann & Ray Chaffin in Hats



OLD TOTE THEATRE COMPANY

THE FATHER

MELBOURNE THEATRE COMPANY

THE DOLL TRILOGY

EVENING STAR PRODUCTIONS

THE TRAINING RUN

Katharine Brisbane

Full Castings by August Strindberg. Adapted by Doug Smith. Perth Theatre Company. N.T.W. (opened 8/1/77). Director: Doug Smith. Designer: Douglas Heath. Actor: Richard Miller. Light: VERA HANCOCK. Sound: ANDREA PUGH. To Be Seen: PETER CURRAN. Music: MAX MILROTH. Music: ALVIN BRYTON. Best Actor: CURRAN. Best Actress: SMITH.

Full Castings by Doug Smith. Perth Theatre Company. N.T.W. (opened 12/1/77 and 11/1/77). Directed by John Sumner. Designer by Doug Smith.

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August Strindberg's gloomy, masculine portrait of a man being destroyed by a household of women is now on stage at the Perth Theatre. Sunday, and my task is to give it some sort of impression.

"Why *The Father*?", one asks oneself. Death as the box office. What makes them? Some take Nordic path to wrath against *The Father* and my share. The *Adversary*, *Conquer and Conquer* and so on is the common reason. Not good enough. Well then it is a love-hate for an actor who needs to play a role like this. Yes, well Richard Miller occupies himself piously well in the role but certainly there is none of that vital of burning commitment by the theatre that one sees into the growth of a great performance. The production, the continuous transition, the clever, characteristic set, all seemed to inspire the energies of the cast and leave the play naked and helpfully exposed.

I am trying hard to imagine what various might have been foreseen by those in charge of

presenting this production. The brochure describes the play as examining a "never ending theme—the battle between man and woman". But the theme in this production does not end, one looked for more, more ending, directions on it—like *Warrior's Passion*, for example, or *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* Or even—*but no—Look Back at Anger*. These are times when a play is right for several but surely, whatever the audience of the present evening we have not yet reached the level of importance and fascination which can result at Strindberg's *Perth Theatre*.

The third reason for choosing a play like this with a respected place in world history but no immediate appeal, that is the educational one, of bringing to light and life a work of literature. The Old Tote Theatre Company has brought from London to direct the play Doug Smith who has also translated it and Douglas Heath to design it. It is not a criticism of their noble intent to see that the result is out of sympathy with the audience but a combination of the fact that you cannot produce just that in the way you can find even that a close to question! produce great again by setting up an international circuit. Because theatre by its very nature is personal and depends for its greatest upon a spontaneous emotional creative act by actor, director, designer and audience. Doug Smith's high-pitched domestic warlike concept from its audience in a small world of designer's artifice. Douglas Heath's modernish set-coloured set is a theatrical device, not an environment for suffering. It makes its point about the desecrations of the play by putting in the seat of the box set not by set and playing shadows on the empty set—then it may be but without reason.

(Curran) I will admit, can obscure a play and Mr. Smith may insist that by changing off the audience of reality and may come in the spiritual qualities more likely. I would contest that it is through the director of that opposite period that the personal and personal simple modernism of the author emerges. But whatever the result, the undeniable fact is that *The Father* is a boring evening with a cast that never gets it together as a team, playing at following without, perhaps as if they were condemned to utter their territory. I must escape from the general good the scene Angela Pugh who manages the child Martha with a concentration of feeling worthy of the author.

Peter Curran (Max Milroth) and Geraldine Siviter (Oliver Smith) in *Sumner of the Dolls* (The Doll Trilogy) at Perth Theatre.

It is that sympathy of actor and audience response, so readily shared from *The Father*, that made the first performance in Melbourne of *The Doll* evince such an emotional occasion, an occasion so far exceeding in totality the sum of its parts. For me it was a momentous event, a kind of vindication of the Australian theatre late read of the people in that audience I carried into the theatre emotional memory of *Summer of the Sweetsmith Doll* and its place in our history, of this sensitive flowering of our drama in the 60s and the disillusion that followed, of Ray Lawler's hopes and fears in a writer, his willing threat and his coming home, and that brave new attempt to come to terms with his Australia. The two new plays were enthusiastically but judiciously received by a press and public used to thinking in terms of *Summer's* stage play let and to whom the little miracle of craftsmanlike wholeness *Old States* is, indeed, a lot too much like yesterday's vegetable.

But performance is a bridge over that narrow strait. February 52 was another masterful shepherd. Such cohesion from both actors and audience one seldom has the privilege of feeling in the theatre. The performances were good, at most very outstanding, but they were marred by the sympathy of the audience to a height which impeded skill. *Warren's* overblown the first light and enveloped in affection those inescapable as the unrelated the once tender flesh of history's old films. *Sandy Gore* is trying to send life on stage at *Nancy*, the one group upon the frozen strange world of *Summer of the Sweetsmith Doll*. *Brian Miles* looking remarkably like the young Lawler in *Barney*.

As an observer I feel the need to go to these to an occasion probably chosen in our theatre history, an actor receiving a shining ovation not just for the attainment of a new achievement, nor—as with Patrick White's laureates call after the *Old States* at Strepentia last year—in reward respect for an old achievement, but in human acknowledgement of beauty which is uniquely and irrevocably ours. A poet has never at last in his own country.

The occasion's acknowledged role to put the plays in perspective. The first two gained by the treatment and in a way *Summer of the Sweetsmith Doll* did too. The first two plays are period pieces and as such have great charm. But *The Doll* is contemporary. It carries as all great drama does, not just the physical context of place, time and action but unconsciously the spiritual change that *Old States* and *Other Times* look back at the 30s and 40s into the tranquility of an older society. *The Doll* is a study of dramatic writing with all the disparate hopes, love and small-scale propensities of a certain art in contemporary or adolescent society. There are discords and even longuissims in seeing the plays together, but the experience enables us to richen further these values unique to *The Doll* as first love of Australian drama. It was a fortunate acknowledgement by the audience on the ground—70s of the simple power of hard-learned qualities of love, sentimentality and awareness within a structure unfairly little intellectual and refined, that brought Ray Lawler, playwright, home to us at last that night.

Though hardly in the same category another play should not go unnoticed by Theatre Australia: Marvin Robertson's *The Trainsman*. *Alan*, just completing a season at the World Pacific Theatre, inspired by an incident in a country policeman in NSW in the 60s, the play has had a long and successful upbringing going back ten years or more and involving a number of readings and workshops including one at the old Harold Scott Theatre and a season at the 1974 National Theatre. Conference



Richard Whittle (*The Captain*) and Denis Persson (*Barney*) in *The Father* Photo: Robert McFarlane

A lot of people have had a lot to say about the songs over the years, but as far as I am concerned, together under the direction of Max Gail and his changed as the play itself consists of almost had trouble of being. In commercial terms, some of the language, I would suggest, is inappropriate for the kind of family entertainment for which the play is otherwise ideally suited (dirty words and ideas are, after all, the province of the suburban theatre) but with this reservation I see no reason—and with the excellent certainty it should not happily play the candidate as transcends into a timeless play.

The Trainsman *Alan* is one in a category of plays written or produced over by a migrant with no eye

for his own comfort. It is disturbed, however, even as one that emerges from the station and the service begins a cover-up campaign. *Col* Gail plays the migrant splendidly and is supported by John Hargreaves as the young court aide who gets his come-uppance (in their apartment) his partly well unappreciated but he makes up for it in ground and fine heavyweight performances from John Clayton and Gordon Piper. Unlike *The Father* and *Summer of the Sweetsmith Doll*, *The Trainsman* *Alan* has no depths to be plumbed, but having come so far and traveled so long I would be sorry if it went so further than *Barney* on the way to the beyond.

MINIBOD THEATRE COMPANY

INNER VOICES

References

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This book, based on the frequency, is appropriate for high school students.

I propose to stage my impressions of *Hamlet* to the Gendreau and Hinkley plays not because I wish to consider the comparative value of the performances, nor because I wish to suggest influence or damage—I have no alternative for Lower Powers knows or cares for such plays—but rather because it will be useful to have examples of comparable material by which to assess the specific and individual work of the Powers's play. For the purpose I am afraid I will have to venture into plot systems which I usually avoid.

[illegible]

Handan's play first staged in Germany in 1999 bears little relation to the historical Kaiser Mauer. The play Kaiser does not show how it really is or really was with Kaiser Mauer. It shows what is possible and it affirms it. Kaiser Mauer therefore can be made to speak through speaking. The play could also be called speech torture. (Handan's notes)

challenge to the play). Handler's notion of 'unaccommodated man' being taught to speak by ungodly programs is dominated by the concept of speech as a means of oppression—a means of creating artificial uniformity by teaching people to conform. The world exists only in terms of the speech patterns that are given.

Major Walter leads the charge with Segismundo. Kasper, figure from an increasingly persistent point of view, has two far better terms of assessment (physical and moral) in neither the accomplished life of the *Walden of Life* in *Germany*, nor in the slightly developed question of Kasper. Rather, it is a character that shows to what it is like to be Segismundo/Kasper and it is at the point where he is beginning to come to an understanding of his position. The character is called even *W*, in a somewhat prescient attitude to Russian history.

[illegible]

The last song shows him rehearsing his position speech at the prompting of some of the 'outer' voices which prompt and teach—and measure himself.

Paul had been using the strategy in my face which had already begun in our one-on-one phone sessions and placed attention on his advantage or relation to the false, self-serving information given to him by Miravitch and the soccer-fans. It is never enough the false values of the world around him, that this was a life a pleasure, that pleasure is the only happiness. I felt a sense of receiving a message that I was not to be deceived. I felt that I was in preparation for the wedding night. Miravitch brother, Juan the "Jorge" of the film, he fails to respond to Miravitch's married instructions. Miravitch says, "I know you should have given him someone to protect you and 'father' you." I didn't think it's a question of that. "He's just a fool for it." I don't know the line to make any particular point—though it seems as an example of the faith, courage, and strength of the man. I feel a sense of being a part of the scene. The man is not a man I met, but I feel I caught a lot, though when, perhaps, a representation of points that are, perhaps, a

Eventually Marowich dies of over-eating. At the moment of his transition from his "third," over-lapping the idealized body image, says loudly "I'm taking now!" and "I'm hungry!" In this moment we catch the instant of Levin's progress: freed of the "teacher" he is able to speak for himself, even though it will be in the context of what he has been taught. And in the same moment there is the beginning of a slave to fear. For himself, even to evaluate when he heard. Unfortunately, Marowich's strong words do seem to arouse the new master to do the thing, *well*.



Page: *William Lloyd and Gilbert Sargent (Middletown)*

[illegible]

If the physical plotting is kept a little vaguer at the end it is because we are no longer outside, but observing life. Events have led us to higher levels in man's own state of mind. The state is an intellectual, moral, and even a philosophical state: nothing that has been perceived or learned can be trusted, but in the very uncertainty of doubt lies power for change and, in it, hope. The learning—out of the chaos a continuous one—is essential for the self-knowledge

In terms of Cendrars's structure it is like untangling the story of the merchant while *Singamondo* has just re-emerged in person, before he can draw any conclusions about his experience. It is like the point at which Kasper begins his, on the other hand, has reached the end of his play with no more than the beginning of an awareness of his position.

Mr. Mervin, of the California, does not give us an answer.

But then, of course, most of us continue to live our lives without us act there, on the painful threshold of self awareness, able to satisfy will and desire until suddenly subjected to shocks which are generally only comprehensible by reference to other people's systems of thought. If I seem to be rambling into my own preoccupations (the point is that the play is of a kind where anyone can ramble).

[illegible]

I have not read much about the production of *John the Bull* because it seems to me to be essentially an exercise of the past, with elaborate paraphernalia from the whole world. Tony (Shadish) Ivers is a strong person to play and it is certainly a role in which an actor can make great claims. James Harnett, the only woman in the cast, is particularly good as Frances Als and the musical singer, Ruby Faye. Presentation of the play on the Governor's stage gives a big place at the time of changes to the performance, but a slight strain on the lack of variation in the kind of scenes it fills. In particular, the three scenes can together a little underutilize and more complex lighting and the use of a few details of setting and props in a larger role. I don't know how to keep these more distinct from each other, but I think it is a pity that the play will not be as good as general audience. The play will be really complete in a modern setting. But the longer and more complex and too many from those which others is confined to that level of a little overcast.

PAUL ELLIOTT AND THE AUSTRALIAN
ELIZABETHAN THEATRE TRUST

THE TWO OF US

Microarray Analysis

FOR FURTHER INFO by Michael From: Western Regional Railroad
N & W (p) 404-211-2111 / Corridor: Patrick Lee, Designer
Terry Parsons, SHEILA HARRISON, JOHN T. LAW, CLARE
NEITHAM, VALERIE BULLITT

New faces in old shows is a recurrent theatrical phenomenon in Australia. This production is the Theatre Royal, Sydney's of *Black Hamlet* and John Thew in *The Two Of Us*, has been followed by Douglas Fairbanks Jr. David Langton and Stanley Holloway in *The Merchant Of Venice*. Later we are to have American film star James Stewart in... could you believe it... *Hamlet*!

One fellow who has observed what's going on in our air has been seeing these interesting over-the-horizon or power works. Even that, that, is not sufficient in his mind, remembering the desert was Peter G'Toole wrote in *Great Speed Quicks* and the first-night Korean War song, *The Mind* with The Gums Men.

The talented Israeli husband and wife team brought over for Century and Melbourne screens of *The Two of Us* (known to Australians only per medium of the screen and the box—*Shade of Heaven* through T.V.'s *Big Big Trade* and many films, and John Tins also in film but most immediately as star of the new *PROBING* show *The Bachelor*).

The play they're in is our first new here in 1972. Many theatregoers will remember the Mirror 51 Theatre production with Anne Haddy and Max Maltman which was so successful it was immediately re-staged for an equally successful run at the Independent Theatre on North Shore Street. "I hope" certainly goes to be convincing.

This new venture is produced by Paul Elliott and started by an association with the **Austin** (an **Electrolux** Thermo Frost and **Playall** Industrial) Piv Ltd and by arrangement with the **M.L.C. Carers Management**—a classic example of the cooperative spirit necessitated by the economic structure in these sectors.

Actually, *The Run of the Gun* is a rare achievement, based almost entirely on understatement in terms of an equal number of Agitations being on the cast, thus making it *The Post of Us*. This Rag focuses extent upon the balance of the show, while the overall velocity that was an essential element of Michael Pate's counter-orientation has been literally pulled and consistently but significantly, the production was only half as much as the original production.

Hannah and Theo play a couple whose return to Mexico to try to regenerate the remnants of their honeymoon is constantly thwarted by the crying of their babe. All the gentle humanity and humor at that situation has somehow vanished under Patrick Leco's direction and the director's idea is unconvincingly made nearly prude as her then husband.

In *The New Classics*, Valerie Pearl plays a mature woman who is an alcoholic from all a party the night before has picked up a lonely young man and allowed him to share his bed. Thus encouraged, he proceeds to move into her cottage, complete with his own study, and she becomes so infatuated with him that she begins to question her philosophy of living. There is an exhilarated and successful rape scene that elicits tremendous energy into the role, but there is no way, however it is logical way, that he can present himself as a young man of 20.

The show's most successful buff came after premier last in the Fall, with Miss Hancock giving a splendid performance, yet strangely leaving my portrayal of a abusive woman, intelligent woman totally ignored by mindbogglingly low sets of of superiority asserted by her husband, played by David Matthews. Almost her only chance of commiseration with hers is the fact, the constant unrelenting taunting of what a cowardly her wife made out to be. (Gladstone)

From the first place, however, is the final play, *Chauvinism*, with Miss Harwood and Thompson again as a married couple trying to cope with an unwanted guest at a dinner party. With outrageous dialogue, considerable timing and many quick changes, between them they play all five male roles in this well-disposed, fast-paced (like most of these) play. Both the host and the unwanted guest, with Miss Harwood as the lady, the unwanted guest is a married wife and husband of all, the wife is a double-breasted

Terry Parnes's *springtime* was the *Academy Award* for Best Picture.



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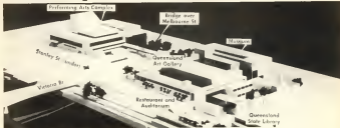
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THE QUEENSLAND SCENE



- ☐ Queensland Theatre Company
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- ☐ The New Cultural Centre

Facility or Liability?

IAN MILLER on the need for and cost of the new Queensland Cultural Centre.

At 11.35 a.m. on Friday, March 11, the Queen stopped onto a strange-looking floating object in the middle of the Brisbane River and pressed a button.

Merely water itself is enough into the air, and so the Queen Jubilee Australia Tour was celebrated, but her simple action did more than that. It gave Royal patron to an embattled cultural enterprise. But what decision to be come a major political headache for the State Government.

Attention of the State is the first concrete step in construction of the Queensland Cultural Centre—long the dream of money-worshipping politicians.

The project was originally to cost \$45 million and now has risen to \$80 million. It is a dream of the State Government, officials readily admit, that they could maintain to \$100 million by the proposed completion date in 1993. Wider claims have put the final figure at a staggering \$200 million.

The arena is destined to be labelled another money-sucking Sydney Opera House, renamed or not. You don't have to drive back to the river to remember the massive cost escalation involved in the Sydney Harbour Opera House. Estimated to cost \$2.5 million in 1965, the final bill was \$155 million when it opened in 1973.

The sheer intransigence of the Opera House is what binds the Sydney, Brisbane is no longer a big issue. But in Brisbane the more conventional, somewhat low status complex will have no such advantage.

Labour ministers at the Opera House and including costs to the centre's Planning and Establishment Committee. So David Blair, minister for culture.

"Of course it will escalate but because of inflation only," he supposed. "In October 1984

the estimate was \$45 million. No doubt there has been substantial escalation since then and would be \$80 million on present day figures. But what I have been trying to get into people's minds is that we will not spend any more money on new facilities.

Form states. But governmental financial statements rarely worry critics or potential donors. Already parolous politicians in security areas are striking such vast expenditure on a limited project, particularly, at one who wishes to remain nameless, "in a fairly subtle for the Queensland and trials in the city social in art."

As for the complex itself, the first of four stages, the art gallery, is expected to be finished early in 1989. Work on the performing arts centre should be completed by mid 1991, the museum by mid 1993 and the library by late 1993. The 13,000 square metre Queensland Art Gallery is an essential priority—the State's art treasures are now being housed in a totally inadequate gallery in Gregory Terrace as well as another stop-gap home in a city building.

The performing arts centre will contain an opera and ballet theatre seating up to 2000, a concert hall for 1000 and a studio theatre for 400. The opera hall will be of variable size with a floating seating to accommodate the most and most to the most spectacular.

It is hard to get an argument with many people about the fact that a cultural complex is needed, but there is plenty of opposition to the inevitable cost escalation, its grandiose and its ultimate efficacy.

Keith Wright, State Labor spokesman on Cultural Affairs. "The State Government will have to set its finger out and build this centre while we can."

It is all very well to talk of increased level and relevance but it is of little use if there are

no facilities. The body that as well go back to their municipalities and industries if there is no place of entertainment.

Mr Wright said he had visited Adelaide and Sydney and it had become increasingly obvious that Queensland needed a decent arts centre. He said there should be multi-story view of the centre in general and country areas where the government could afford it.

John Thompson, Executive Director of the Queensland Opera Co., said the cost estimate for the performing arts centre of the complex was \$17 million. "Having regard to the physical state of theatre in Brisbane it is something that just has to be done and money that has to be spent," he said. According to Mr Thompson the final concept of the variable seat for the opera and ballet theatre, stated to satisfy everyone. "Everything seems to be going along the right lines," he said.

Another criticism, that the complex hall is too small, is one made by entrepreneur Michael Fogley.

So David May, speaker. "He is talking about bringing out. Anyway for another piece of such nature it has to be stated that such as seem where an audience of 1000 could be attracted would happen only once or twice a year. We have to be prepared, and expect improvements have come up with the 2000 capacity."

He also denied suggestions that Opera and ballet would need additional subsidy because of the large cost of renting the theatre.

Perhaps we should leave the final word with former State Treasurer. So Gordon Clark who gave the original go-ahead up to launch the project. "There will be no reason for it to be referred to as another Opera House. What happened to the Opera House was that people did not understand what the final design would be nor how to put the roof on."

Theatre Organisation



Alan Edwards, Artistic Director, Queensland Theatre Company

WHERE THERE'S D

Don Batchelor

The Queensland Theatre Company did not grow organically. It was a government graft on to the local scene. Beginning with an untried Board, an "outsider" as Director, not a single patron of its own, and no group of professionally trained personnel to draw on, it might well have addressed itself for some time to laying foundations.

However, a combination of Queensland's often uncritical sense of itself and the artistic fortuitousness of the first few months of Q.T.C. history allowed no time for gradual building. An immediate and unquestioning commitment was made to the model of a main line, professional repertory company along provincial British lines, with the additional, independent intention of serving the whole State immediately.

The Company featured well to early privilege: firms because it found an audience that was substantially new and then characterised in a negative rather than in markers of theatrical technique and approach. In such a climate, it began to find its progress leading superior to the social factors or values of certain artistic theories every little while.

As to any challenging philosophical trends the issue of a national alternative has once or twice been raised, student but pretty often, and

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EMERGING PATTERNS

Brisbane's Albert Hall was, in its latter years, a shabby and unsuspicious venue for live theatre. Yet generations of Brisbane theatre-goers had been raised on the nine or ten theatres presented in this modest centre city hall. Fitting then, that from its ashes should arise a fine theatre and the State's first resident professional theatre company to play in it. For had it not been for the insistence of the proprietors of the Methodist Church, no less, that in redeveloping the site the State Government Insurance Office replace the venue for the annual Methodist convention, the chain of events leading to the rapid formation of the Q.T.C. may not have occurred.

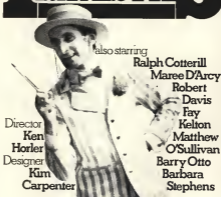
The Australian Elizabethan Theatre Trust approached the Queensland Government in mid 1968 to request finance for building a theatre in Brisbane to house a resident company and to provide an alternative to His Majesty's Theatre for touring shows. The Government declined planning related to the S.O.I.O. theatre to be and for the next three years, the company consisted of the Queensland Government, an Insurance Company, and the Trust, banded to produce the Q.T.C. Early in 1969 a Board was set up under the chairmanship of Sir Donald Murray to establish the new company. Murray was both forerunner, and so presided with the first production, *The Royal Hunt of the Sun*, joining the talents of the local semi-professional group another classic, sculptural, Russian play, and some of the more lively contemporary works from the West End. Q.T.C. came to be official



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Q.T.C. cont'd.

this is his last play for youngsters. It means the end of a cycle. This year we must take stock and see if there is any more effective way of involving young people in theatre. Fortunately in the warming economic climate we at last had a windfall.

1977: PROJECT SPEARHEAD.

A \$24,000 Innovations Grant from the Schools Commission will enable us to implement a scheme we have been hatching for some years—Project Spearhead.

Spearhead is designed to take most of the work of the Drama Teacher and the professional theatre practitioners.

The project has two concepts —

In the classroom, a few main areas of actors' training give students a vocabulary of theatre skills that will enable them to analyse and govern programming on the issues that concern them.

Outside the classroom, the team works in streets and alleys in fully realised productions, with Community Youth Theatres and High School Drama Clubs. The team will work for two months in the Brisbane metropolitan area and for three weeks in country districts.

Just as the developments in our youth performances spring from a shaping concern, so too did Spearhead. Theatre Education to often loses sight of its well-spring, the source of its energy and vitality—the theatre. The prime concerns of T.T.B. are personal development and social awareness. But once we have developed the personality that would serve to be the end of it.

We do not go on to develop these skills as a means of expression to the extent we could like, but we prefer that skills to the place where the student gets the excitement and joy the actor does out of practicing his craft well. No, I don't encourage the High School replicating of Q.T.C. Yes, please come from the school instead.

Some teachers realise the value of T.T.B. yet stop short of exploring its full potential. There are several good reasons. They do not wish to turn out Shylock Tragedies. They do not wish to inspire (as the Director of the school material must to get results). Few teachers have sufficient knowledge or experience of the actor's craft.

It must be possible to recruit a small but essential body of Theatre concepts and skills that will enable students to express themselves well and that will provide the pleasure of producing a craft well. The problems is which concepts, which skills; how many, how few? Spearhead will provide some support.

1977: THE Q.T.C. DARLING DOWNS YOUTH THEATRE.

For six years the Q.T.C. has been running a free-in Drama course for teenagers—Theatre Experience Week. After two years of experience (the students) in talk-back sessions expressed dissatisfaction. "We've had the Experience, now what about some techniques?" So a second course, Theatre Techniques Week, was implemented.

Three years later in talk-back: "We've got the techniques, now what do we go from here?" Robert Kington, a young televisioner/actor, decided (in the next 12 months in Poland with Groszowski) suggested major—The Darling Downs Youth Theatre Project. Kington, Rick Thompson (Administrator) and Lloyd Neilson



Ray Garrow, Dr O'Connor and Frank Gullacher in *A Clock, A Crown & A Sword*. Photo: I. & G. Pierce

Designer/Theatre/Director) are now involved in Queensland, hub of the Darling Downs and of the new Q.T.C. Youth/Education pilot scheme.

For six months the team will work in all aspects of theatre with some forty 15 to 18 year olds drawn from six centres in the Darling—120 kilometres west of Brisbane and roughly half the year in role at Toowoomba. The project will culminate in a production of *The Book of Genesis*, devised, scripted and rehearsed in workshops. After its opening in Toowoomba, Garrow will tour the six centres from which the

school has been called.

Besides their deep interest in theatre and their expertise, Kington and Gullacher have two things in common—open minds and the flexibility to adapt old forms to new needs. All three discuss the belief that is important in an experiment is the understanding of it is more so. They should uncover much.

For the Q.T.C. this is an important step for work in two directions—the establishment of a professional Youth Theatre and the decentralisation of theatre in the state.



William Arthur, Phil Mays, Mick Henderson and Brian Brown in *Spring*.

A TONIC FOR IMPOTENCE

Don Batchelor

The people of Queensland appear to be politically powerless. One group, though, the **POPULAR THEATRE TROUPE** refuses to remain silent. But their method is to charm their audiences, not offend them.

There is a common belief outside Queens-land that we Bananal Islanders are a bunch of idle whose personalities are so stunted in the sun that we accept without question the force that beats us political life north of the Tweed River. This assessment knows nothing of the anguished sense of impotence many people feel at the wider expanse of our "leaders".

What do you do in a place where, on TV, thousands witness a brutal police officer beating a young woman prisoner. I can behave without extreme provocation, only to have the Premier, who claims to not want the fibre, cancel a proposed inquiry by the Police Commissioner on the grounds that the officer concerned explained what he had been obliged to do (The same officer has since been pensioned)?

How do you react as one of a group of 85,000 citizens of Brisbane who signed a petition calling for a referendum on a State proposal to take over electricity supply from the Council, when the responsible Minister announces that the legislation will proceed even if there are 300,000 protesters?

It was in such a mood of bitter bitterness and loss at the resignation of Mr. Ray White (former Police Commissioner) on the face of what he called undue political interference in police matters and questions of justice, that I recently saw the Popular Theatre Troupe.

The occasion was a performance of The Allstars' *Madness* before a small group of Bananal Islanders at something called the Premier's Hall in one of Brisbane's less celebrated outer suburbs. We were once a secondary comparison of people as we stood while the three people recited a prayer with growing sincerity and then led a wailing, wailing, but unaccompanied rendition of "Good Bye the Queen" as a final act of protest to the afternoon's events.

There was a brisk and polite leading introduction by one of the troupe, and then a good, polite vocal performance of the play and the songs as we were introduced to the point that I forgot my reviewer's task almost entirely. All formal theatrical considerations seemed irrelevant instead of being the usual barrier to sharing the play.

Something about the audience was most affecting. There was no protest on, no wailing,

no pushing, just a quiet commitment to a witty little aspect of the alienation of Big Business, politicians, and unions in their greedy exploitation of Australia's natural wealth and their dis-possession of its native people.

The show consisted of a cluster of "images" around the central idea of a home rap which permits some telling analogies about the bet, the people, and the corrupting force in the "inserting" of native people at about the Queens-land Government sitting as "your entirely impartial Clerk of the Court".

It is the simple apprehensions of those analogies, with all their resonance about the gambler's impact for easy money, and the paid Clerk (the gambler) as elected willing agent to the fixing that goes on behind the scenes, that is so compelling, that our bold theatricality was making honour.

To be able to laugh was like a tonic, and suddenly one realised what power lay in the realisation that informed this apparently harmless game of theatrical variation. And what is more, one felt that for once there was a group which could claim to "speakman". As Albert Hume has said, "There are some great comic characters



Joel Mahoney, Nick Hughes, Judith James, Rodney Armstrong & David Campbell in *Madness* by Handcap

which deliberately set out to "scare, assault, and offend their audience. We try to make life a little more relevant with the audience to deal with the hard material." Well, Albert! I was privileged to see it happen last afternoon in the Performance Hall in Brisbane.

Albert Mucci was the man who introduced the techniques of the style of Theatre event to Australia, and the person whose important role it was to invite Mucci to the 1968 Old Festival of the Arts in May 1974, was Richard Featherstone (known by his name). On that occasion, a random group presented the method in a production called *One Trick*. It was a largely unsuccessful half-sustained attempt that took as its political material the double standard resulting from the Gai Affairs (later made well-known by the *Pleasant Company* and *Gay Community*) which looked as if they would be his arch-enemy, the old gaudy Gai's (which).

After the event, all concerned acknowledged a limited success, but wanted to develop it further. In June, 1974, The People's Theatre Troupe was formed and set about raising the funds to operate.

By now the group is well established enough to have a limited success, but wanted to develop it further. In June, 1974, The People's Theatre Troupe was formed and set about raising the funds to operate.

By now the group is well established enough to have a limited success, but wanted to develop it further. In June, 1974, The People's Theatre Troupe was formed and set about raising the funds to operate.

winning, even shop windows have served

They have travelled extensively in their home State, but are establishing quite a reputation as far as the Adelaide and with city and country audiences in Victoria and New South Wales.

Shows have included *The Holy Little Life Show* described as "a series of vaudeville games, songs and sketches about sex", *The White Man's Show* which looks at the white man's arrival in Australia with songs, music, sketches, and games, and *The White Man's Show* which looks at the white man's arrival in Australia with songs, music, sketches, and games, and *The White Man's Show* which looks at the white man's arrival in Australia with songs, music, sketches, and games.

An only last time the Troupe has two or three shows in the available repertoire and funds them for six months or so. In addition, they work in the community in which they find themselves, doing workshops with kids, organising women's meetings, or performing games with a group of four to six people. In the past, for example, they set up a theatre group of Sisters and Ladies and invited people from each group to the Aboriginal Legal Service, State Unions, Friends of the Earth, Art Students, and Men's groups to participate. In the end, about 1000 members of the public stood in the event for an hour or two hours.

Without their own with a few friends, members over a five-year period after the performance, or before-hand, or some previous show, they set up for a show, and finally, that the real aim of the Troupe is that it is committed to the idea of being "people" by which one means "of the people". It is this aim and consideration for all sorts and conditions of men which flows out of their plays into their lives. Of course they feel as often as they succeed in the difficult task—but I believe them with all my heart for trying.



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HOW ARE YOU HOLY TRINITY?

Paul Sherman on the Brisbane Pro-Am Theatres

Brisbane's currently dispersed network of theatres is hard for the outsider or new comer to map. Twenty years ago I remember the scene was dominated by a Holy Trinity—Twelfth Night, B.A.T., and Repertory.

When I first played with *Twelfth Night* then, Rhoda Fajpelt directed us in Maribeth on a handy, if modest, Elmhurst stage which we built within the old Albert Hall (now, done in for the courtyard of the B.G.I.C.). All the games during the Albert, and we were all members, except that some of the boys did A.B.C. (what A.B.C. means in Kennedy's children). We did plays without worrying whether we were going to be a hit, or become a star, or get a grant, or anything else—except whether we wanted to do it.

Sometimes the scene is very different. The Holy Trinity survives but, except for La Borte (Repertory), the visual vital and innovative work comes from a cluster of smaller theatres, often inspired by C.A.B. and University students, and other young people.

Twelfth Night, after a road development named the Globe's Hall, closed and moved under Joan Wiley (who also could get us to actually travel south) to build its joyous audience at near suburban Bowes Mills. Always having a more

troupester, the theatre's student/semi-student packs like Ted Geog's production of *Three Sisters* and Malcolm Robertson's *Summer and Spring* after it were professional. Now that the State has bought the theatre, the company performs instead of moans. Appropriately, the first play for 1987 is to be *Georgiana Carter* (including relatives on TV personality Barbara Stephens and the Marx Brothers, Jimmy and Harl). Most Brisbane theatre people don't know that a little old *Twelfth Night*, and not having the current canon a limited utility. B.N.T. has proved better than it has the Phoenix factor.

B.A.T.—Brisbane Amateur Theatre—is now The Arts. Always a friendly, family sort of theatre, its adult citizens members by the late Joan Threlkeld and its children's groups were the special apple of Yvonne Hester's eye. Its first home on Parris Terrace having been tried by her, the Arts rebuilt with modesty and now has a secure base. Though occasionally by living with an unknown play (as once with my *Midnight in the Arts* giving a fairly "safe" experience. Though only this year they'll be out on the boards with *Wagner's Ring*), they'll be back within the next year with *Night After Fall* and *The Man Who Came to Dinner*. Australian drama will be represented by *The Shuffling Men*.

With no analogue to the G.T.C., the theatre

that really goes to kick Brisbane along is La Borte, operating on a main branch of the State Theatre's activity. Looking like a grandy church from the outside, La Borte is a square round theatre just across the road from the outer entrance to Brisbane's biggest theatre-in-the-round, the Lang Park Rugby League field—so how about a *Twelfth* night at George's *The Changing Room*?

Following dynamite world director Gilberte Stephens and Jennifer Blackledge, La Borte now has a sought-after slinger in Rich Ellinghurst, who was recently breathing fire at one while he was simultaneously setting lights for *Balder's Chorus* and focusing on the road for "here and now" plays. Looking at the lights, I remembered a North Brisbane C.A.B. stadium looked a football into it as during *Big Men*. No more a few years ago.

La Borte has retained much of its old Repertory prestige while doing full-out for new, young blood. Young stages, middle stages, adult actors and writers work hard in and under the theatre, and in the old days (and a bit now) there's a 180 degree involved in there a few every week," says Rich.

La Borte's bill for 1987 ranges from *Shore's* *On the Rock* to rock and roll. But the most interesting project in the stages all plays by these Queensland playwrights. Lorne Bell's *Trackdown* and



Summer School drama for teachers at Kelvin Grove C.A.B., Brisbane

prize-winner John Shearer's *The Arts and The Feet* will rub shoulders with veteran Garret L. Dean's *In Beauty It's Finished*.

La Brea is a strong supporter of Queensland Playfest, which is organising a Queensland Playwrights' Conference at La Brea on the first weekend in April, coinciding with the Queen's land season.

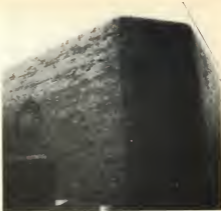
Students could do with more of the Park in local writers than is found at La Brea. There is provision only at the adult level, but with the "middle players" — where De la Voie, young writer Simon Gerrington is now being developed. There has also been a healthy development at North Brisbane C.A.B. where Greg Hadd has been able to have his one act plays performed by fellow students and to produce his own and other full-length plays. Now a teacher, Greg still comes back to work with the student's Actors Union, a group that is really alive and kicking.

In touring plays by Queenslanders, notably Bill Brown's *Spring* trilogy, the Q.T.C.'s education department under Murray Fay is at work with the most promising T.E. work of other groups. The new emphasis on open ended Theatre in Education work do not reduce the need for "reader's rooms" indeed, they widen the scope from which diverse resources need to be drawn. Though their aim is to broaden the scope of a writer, they must ultimately draw their local writers, especially among the young. Service and awareness use of even classical material has been demonstrated by Bryan Hayes's *One and Two* plays. His *Wall Shakespeare* or *Love* was more readily accepted Shakespeare, but a dynamic presentation of a theme, burdened with the hermeneutic study of great work that has always characterised the best of his more endeavours.

A lovely new theatre in Camerata, adapted from a former bakery past down the road from the somewhat larger home of Queensland's Camerata. At present David Gellie is Playfest embroiled in the challenge of staging *The Winter's Tale* in Camerata's totally intimate space. Future plans include Chekhov's *The Seagull*, Sam Shepard's *Antony and Cleopatra*, Ford's well received *The Jew* and a whole, modern French dramatist (Rostand's) *White Mince* and Arthur Miller's *A View from the Bridge*. Camerata has declared its interest in local plays, so I guess they will look long.

While University students are hopeful that a Utah grant will enable the Camerata Box (after the somewhat less but expensive addition) to be re-opened, students are in greater performance in the Arts. The C.A.B. is in a good and fortunate North Brisbane, as well as its vibrant spirit, is being a centre for local regional theatre and for many plans, including several opportunities by local poets, beginning on April 20. Kelvin Grove Community will follow Kennedy's *Children* with *Stacey's Move*, and Kennedy director Gary O'Neill is already casting a *Garthman* programme. Kelvin Grove College Theatre will do *Charlie*. Set in April. Students working with Peter Lavery are into a stuporous group of a *Tutor* (recently, *All the Money and All the Money*) *We met with you at Rigoletto's*, sharing the same set. Last year's *Grave* will be the way for Marilyn Monroe in *Rigoletto's* *Love* hope more than some like it had.

Stop Press. After writing this article, I have heard news that Camerata is having some problems of legal. It seems that complaints to the City Council about noise and parking have led Camerata to seek other theatres for future shows. *Winter's Tale* director David Gellie informs that the Shakespeare plays will open for the week from April 7 at the Avon Theatre, Sir Fred Schofield Drive, St. Lucia.



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About fifty theatre people from drama, film and music groups, from entrepreneurial and educational bodies, and a few cultural bureaucrats, took part in the recent short pilot course in theatre administration arranged by the National Institute of Dramatic Art at the request of the New South Wales Government.

Back in the nineteenth century, the careers of such Australian theatre personalities as George Coppin, George Carroll, Alfred Dampier and Williamson, to mention only a few, show that theatre managers often progressed their careers from the ranks of successful actors.

Today theatre administration is much more specialized. Public response to the performing arts has brought with it the demand for public control over how the money is spent. Accountability has, very properly, raised and professional skills are now essential.

Good theatre administrators must, however, be more than just efficient business managers. An awareness of the impact on management of artistic criteria is vital, and the success of a theatre ultimately hinges on the existence of a harmonious and creative relationship between the administrative side and the artistic direction of the enterprise.

The purposes of the recent NIDA course was to supplement the knowledge of people already working in the performing arts with additional skills and information designed to help them function more effectively in theatre administration. Among the many relevant facts and figures incorporated in the meetings, the following questions and remarks seem particularly noteworthy.

ON THE ARTS

"The Arts are one of the measures of a country's civilization." — Dale Turrentine (President of the Board of Directors of the Old Tote Theatre Company)

THE PEOPLE

"The theatrical enterprise that is going to survive are going to be the ones who do things professionally." — Mr Turrentine prophesied, having commented on a trend towards the payment of directors who, at present, despite their artistic responsibilities, still act in an honorary capacity. He said that the selection of plays for the company's repertoire "should be made by the Artists' Committee".

"Theatre is a people industry" — Peter Smith (General Manager) talked about production budgets in the role of Stage Director, advising people to look at the physical characteristics of their theatres, to plan well ahead, and only one actor to look but also a big book for rights and royalties when discussing suitability.

"Good publicity people are born, not made" — Barbara James (Chairman of JCR's publicity office) said that, keeping in mind that your first duty is to management, the publicity task is extensive research into the theatre organization you are serving, their 'product' and the audience you are to reach. The establishment of good relations with the Arts are the next most important factor.

"I wouldn't have an efficient girl who is a waste of money" — Marnie Pevensy (Theatre Manager, Old Tote) found highly efficient and motivated, well-paid box office producers who are eager and so that the "see, sell, instantly how many tickets are sold" and to whom and when, look to the first Tote performance of *The Cherry Orchard* in 1983.

"Any advertisement is only as good as its staff" —

The People Industry

Compiled by Martin Thiersch

Elizabeth Swearing (Former Administrator of the Oxford Playhouse, at present Director of the South Australia branch of the Arts Council of Australia) thought that because of the prosperity complex and therefore declining standards of accountability which is tied up with the security of established institutions, there is a necessity for change in the basic attitude—which needs to be more imaginative—and in the psychology of administration—which she said is being some what negative at present. Skills of a new kind, she said, would be required in future and she selected people to "think positive". Responsibility and control were the most necessary qualities in the running of theatre as a business, a concern for the human beings and for the human talent of which theatre has a lot to tell.

THE ORGANISATIONS

"One of the earliest Unions (Gowrie)" — Mike Gowrie (Theatre Company for Actor's Equity) agreed the role of unemployment among the acting profession, when discussing the "incredibly good Federal and State Government awards that govern actors. He said they should be passed more and that awards only set the minimum payment, warning that "if you're not generally well served the actors interests. 'We are in the business of communication'". — Faith Martin (actors, directors and writers' agent) outlined the creative relationship between theatre artists and their agents, saying that agents often should beware of taking advantage of their strong position in being able to put down packages of work. Believing in the re-structuring of new material, she saw strong potential in the co-operation between producers, performers and playwrights and would like to see new people given encouragement, and a symbol taken by participants concerned with talent.

THE MARKET

"Before you market, get in touch with the market" — Ray Butcher (producer) said a show, there is a tendency to charge too little, don't work on the assumption of too much interest, face reality" — Donald McQuinn (General Manager, Master Vire Society) related with much sense on many aspects of company budgeting. "It is most important to know all about the play" — Paul Dan Glavin and Rosemary McManus, Old Tote spoke about financial budgeting, stating that the producers should must be worked out backwards from the opening night and could take a period of six months to get ready.

THE MONEY

"There is a lot of money around" — Ken Hofer (Art Advisor, Director of the National Theatre) stated that his fundraising advice by soliciting from the participants their accounts of efforts to obtain financial support. These stories, written by two students, included themes: *Think Big, Aim High and Go To The Top*. He emphasised the importance of having a strategy, ideas and an attractive proposal to present to potential money givers, and outlined two other means by which sources of industry might be induced to donate funds to the arts: monthly, the relevance and glamour of the theatre, and money considerations like tax deductibility.

"It is important to improve the climate of

opinion towards the arts" — Bob Adams (Secretary of the Theatre Board of the Australia Council) outlined the process and establishment of the Federal Government's arts funding agency, being at pains to point out the 1977 decision, by 27% at first term, in available finance from the crown. Although it disperses public money, the Council is interested in audience development, community participation and the improvement in access to the performing arts by deprived groups. At present approximately 50% of theatre production costs are covered by box office income in Australia on average, and the other 50% comes from Federal and State subsidy. He mentioned the problem of educating politicians who, accepting that support for the arts is essential in terms of the health of the community.

THE LAW

"There is no special virtue in a piece of paper" — Ken Hofer (Director of the National Theatre) pointed out that verbal contracts between management and performer are binding and that a one-page letter of agreement with rights and rate of payment was sufficient to confirm the offer and acceptance of employment. He also discussed playwrights' royalty payments of a percentage of gross box office revenue, meaning that a firm agreement is important in success can often cause trouble.

THE PLACES

"Theaters are the most difficult people to convince of the value of theatre and to involve in the program" — Ross Delaney (NSW Education Department, Speech and Drama Specialist) spoke about the T.I.E. approach that is relevant to the local area as well as of the other two forms of theatre in schools: performance by assessment and productions of all sorts. He said that a whole syllabus is no reason for looking at a one-year stable to keep it at all" — Elizabeth Swearing advised James Agnew a director of her meetings about what she called "the message of the minimalist" which threatens to push the horse from the middle of the funnel.

Monitoring the alternative processes of 'year' or 'period', she warned to say that now the several State theatre companies were established and standards had been raised, theatre needed a place in the community and that placed today in the operative word.

Everyone who took part in the seminar agreed it and thought it a good idea—all except one person—and agreed they would like to put efforts again in such a climate. There were some problems with those from smaller theatres who could have been comforted by the concise accounting and box office procedures of the Old Tote. Lecturers talked in a lot, and more workshops from students. Most people felt that the art of theatre should be lived every day, though the attempt to cover in five days a field that in England and the US is treated in twelve months is an enormous undertaking.

inspiration, a hand hacked off still clinging its sword, a part of blood splashing from the sleeve wall, and occasional pithos (Irene carries an Ophelia's naked corpse over her shoulder). Zerk's most recent attempt at lending a script to structure was his Hamburg production of Ophelia, again in a musical on with rocky contents (Max P. Fajol). The script was stripped of professional polish and infused its superficial study and emotional nihilism, and Ulrich Weidinger as Ophelia swayed and floated in a sticky black ether, blocked to the walls, and embracing his Gerdemore copiously torn and aft as he embraced her. She appeared in a series of costumes in her "Western Ford Lady of the South vulgar sort" in the final scene Ophelia chased her round the darkened stage, writhed with her on the bed, and her up with ether, draped her over a landscape like a rag doll as Gerdemore approached, then finally to bed for a dying thing before the Venetian audience took over.

The first night audience almost roared after Zerk's, and the critics were cool, but the production has found an audience and it much in demand. Stuttgart, Mannheim and Regensburg have already seen it, Berlin, Munich and Zurich are about to, and this is a measure of the interest of the German press in Ophelia—more than in the West than in. The Berliner Ensemble tend to do a drink with Brecht's "Man Ate and was quickly recommended by Ophelia, the production disappearing after a handful of performances.

Relationships between Braun and Zerk we must place. Claus Peymann who has put the Berliner Ensemble's Schauspiel Stuttgart among the top three theaters in Germany since his appointment in 1964. Peymann made his name directing new plays such as Peter Handke's *The Ashes* over Lake Constance (Berlin, 1971) and Thomas Bernhard's *The Ignominious and the Lucerne (Salzburg)* Festival, 1972) and he still produces new writing in Stuttgart, bringing out Barthelme's *Kafka's Faces*, *Mixed Feelings* and *Gerard Manthey's* *Breath's Children*, a recent director of the latter's small German town during World War II seen through the eyes of a child, last year.

He has a big, talented company and last year devoted to study its talents with inviolable classic, Heinrich von Kleist's *Kathleen von Heiden* a comedy of classical writers in 1976. The dramatists were fascinated by the theme, an authoritarian love story (the white girl and the count) combined with a mission name of love (Kathleen falls in love with Werner von Souda as his agent and sticks to him to the happy end). It is a play full of love, new form, new characters, and Peymann managed to make his performance effects with poetic phrases (Kathleen's most beautiful: "a beautiful young, was consumed in required lights and a leopard skin top. She answers Souda with a song, and in the show on death he and his across the stage, embracing him to the floor in a rope web, a tolling image pulled off to perfection. When Kleist sends Kathleen into a burning castle to rescue a cadaver on angel flowers overhead. Achim Freyer filled the place to envelope on the stage with blue smoke. It collapsed on Kathleen who emerged unharmed followed by a naked angel after the style of a hawk, winged Christmas cardholder. The set and costumes of Freyer's design and costumes contributed much to the play's success. For the finale, Souda and Kathleen with redoubled the stage, the latter with a smooth doll's face on the back of her head, so the wall street seen first (Lorenz Bräuer's present face, then the smooth child, perfectly expressing Kleist's strange mixture of realism and phantasy.



Above: Kleist's *Der Katochen von Heidenberg* in Stuttgart

Photo: A. Fajol

Below: Peter Zerk's Hamburg Schillertheater production of Ophelia



So in Germany at the moment we have been reformed in politics, conservative in style, producing definitions, statistically prepared professions, and in general Zerk's exploiting effects of quality and baroque in style has been

the audience as a perplexed citizen. However, these Hegelian indulges his phantasies and those of his designer, but keeps burning in as the heart of the play, into which he describes the audience as changing progress, Aristotelian theatre in its modern way.

THEATRICAL PROJECTION AND EDUCATIONAL ENTERPRISE

Keith Hudson

Mount Gravatt College of Advanced Education, which trains primary and secondary teachers, offers a major elective sequence of courses in Drama, of which one course is entitled broadly "Twentieth Century Theatre". In 1976 we undertook a slightly more ambitious project than usual by producing Chekhov's *Uncle Vanya* at La Bonte Theatre.

We aimed this to be not merely a theatrical production but also an educational enterprise: we intended the cooperation of five (female) high schools and these plans to take fifth and sixth form English classes in these schools studying the *Nightingale*, preceding the production. More little drama is taught in Queensland schools, and our idea was that our students should attempt to introduce drama in such a way that when the school students saw *Uncle Vanya* their perception and hence their enjoyment would be increased. After the play we would visit the schools once more to discuss values arising and to receive feedback.

We spent a month working out how to achieve what we wanted to do and why we thought Chekhov did it particularly well. Ultimately we decided that drama arose from an attempt to identify and deal with the eternal struggle between "good" and "evil". We noted that in the less sophisticated forms of drama these distinctions are always clear-cut, and there is little danger of an audience not knowing whose side they should be on; you can tell which cowboy in the West because he always rides a white horse, for instance.

As the audience's experience of drama and process of dramatization develops, however, these distinctions become more blurred, and the conflict becomes more subtle. Moreover we chose to have their human feelings, the real values may have been in the right after all. This simple clarification of knowing that justice has triumphed in the end and is replaced by a more refined pleasure than of watching the good and evil, and directing the appropriate amount of sympathy to either side and that of feeling the balance of good's sympathy leave and change as the play reveals new insights into the characters. We found it interesting to compare recent and old film and T.V. drama, and assess the genres and the methods of presentation.

When we approached Chekhov from the d-



Mount Gravatt's first production between Aurora & Yelena

action, we saw that as a highly sophisticated play. It is hard to establish clear cut rights and wrongs in the plays, and to see where we can sympathize (or, perhaps with all his characters perhaps with none. Our own sympathies may be equally ambiguous. In *Uncle Vanya* in particular, some people may sympathize with Yelena, imprisoned in a tedious marriage to a man old enough to be her grandfather or her own daughter as a manipulative bitch. Some may feel for Vanya, as he bewails his frustration and regret

that, when may say it is his own fault. Perhaps Sonia, herself enduring in the end of the play, shares the most subtle character, yet it only she had shown a little more initiative she could have had. As a new perfectly lovely. Or would she, perhaps have been worse as him? And so on. The network of personalities and feelings is so delicately constructed that we can question endlessly.

Students went in groups of three, armed initially with a short and easily recognizable memo on a "goodies and baddies" theme. They performed this, and led us to a discussion about the elements of drama, the one followed by a second memo, which started in the same way as the first but gradually shifted the audience's sympathy so that it became harder to decide who was in fact good and who bad. The point to be made was that drama shows conflicts sometimes between easily identifiable "right and wrong", and sometimes more complexly, ambiguously.

The students then led the classes in a number of question exercises, at first in pairs and then demonstrating the additional complexities of themselves. We spent some time on this, and a somewhat a great deal of it seemed discussed. Most of the pupils had done no practical drama before, and the response was not surprised that it might go very well, particularly with the more confident classes. Only after all this was *Uncle Vanya* presented. We gave some information about Chekhov and his style of writing, as well as a synopsis of the background to the action of *Uncle Vanya*. The drama is discussed in fairly short of two sections from the play and the others have been on a similar level up of the play. The question was asked: Given these kinds of people all brought together in the same house, what can they would you expect to expect?

A second and more subtle question was: Given that these people all think of themselves as people and involved, how will their conflicts make themselves manifest? The question goes to the heart of Chekhov's style, his characters are shown in tiny ways, sometimes verbally but sometimes only by slight movements or pictures which may be interpreted to be an unspoken observation. In fact, the class decided that there might be hostility between Sonia and her new, young and attractive stepfather, they were asked to watch the two actresses closely for signs of it.

Following this, each group of students gave

small a short extract from the play, with the aim of demonstrating some of the differences between the script on the page and the play on the stage, and showing how one starts with the first and gradually works towards the second. One group took the argument in Act 1 between Maria and her mother (started by reading it), then acted it referring closely to the script and equation of lines, and finally gave a free rendering in which it became clear that it is the fading of that temper which counts, rather than what exactly is said.

Other groups worked on the Yvelina-Sonia relationship. Is Yvelina's offer of friendship in Act II genuine? Has she Sonia's interests really at heart, or is she a selfish manipulator? The text will take either interpretation, and different movements, expressions, gestures and positions, can convey two quite different impressions. The importance of, for example, the roll over position on stage at the two women was illustrated. Yvelina admits to Sonia that she is not happy. If she looks into Sonia's eyes at the time it will not affect if she turns her back we get quite another. Linda Smith says: 'You will tell me the truth, won't you?', Yvelina replies: 'Of course'. It proved easy to show how an actress can convey to the audience how seriously they should take Yvelina's words.

We have two groups of these students in the five schools. They work well motivated, and come back encouraged for the next term.

In Basel, at an act of faith which we appreciate, put us the theatre for three days, and we did everything ourselves. We played three nights, with one interval. We had previous visits from audiences at three of the performances, but on one evening the audience was more relaxed. I have never known an audience make as much difference to a play. On that evening we arranged a woman, and play, at each of the other performances. It was a genuine comedy (perhaps Chekhov was right in thinking that he was not very good). Part of the difference was no doubt due to the fact that it was the last act, and effort of the day, and they may have had less energy in them. But part at least was due to the eyes of the audience. The older audience people saw a different play through different eyes, and the cast responded by playing with more restraint and caution. Perhaps it is just that when you are 16 or 20, the spectacle of an inexperienced 42 year-old bewitching his agents that he has done nothing with his life is funny, when you are middle aged it is not. The difference between comedy and tragedy is often a matter of how close you are standing to the events. This is a point which is valuable learning experience for the students, for them, the play becomes more alive as they read it. The audience doesn't show how caught up they are. An example was in 'Maria's' Act II soliloquy about Yvelina, which showed how she might have been if he had fallen in love with her ten years earlier, they would tonight have been in bed together, and the would have stolen, frightened by the storm, and he would have comforted her and said 'don't worry, it's all right, I'm here'. When to the actor's surprise the first sight audience gave a hearty laugh at this, yet in retrospect we agreed that yes, they were right, the idea of anyone feeling reassured by the presence of a bustling fool like Maria was indeed funny. The fact that he thought it was serious, of course, made it funnier.

My own most surprising moment of the production was on the last night when, in the final act, Aron is struggling to hang about trying to give himself to leave for good, and the Nancy darts and attacks her by offering her coffee. There was a silence before he answered, during

from page 45



Above: Yvelina listens to Sonia confessing her feelings for Aron

Below: Sonia attempts to console Uncle Maria at the close of the play



(T.J.E. 4000, 4001 pages 48)

which the only movement was Greta's running in her chest to give him a breeding tool (which he didn't see) in that moment we tried to remind the audience that she had earlier in the play begged him to be different from other men and not drag himself down by doing. After the scenes, Astron accepts the offer (well—perhaps), and in that decision finally finds himself in the rest that he has dug for himself. That is the last decision for Astron (and for Greta), after that there is no hope. It is only, and what a moment, and can't be played too obviously: the point is that in each day, and what a way our decisions are tested. The most pleasing moment of the whole production was the quiet yet sinister scene where Greta "sings" from 40 Breasts Geta's Greatest Songs (yes). They use the power!

My own conclusion was that you do not have to offer children superficial, simplified rubbish. School drama need not be like the *Village* and *The Chinese Garden*. Properly prepared, they are quite capable of appreciating at least a sliver of a play of quality.

The student voted the schools once more for discussion about the play and production, and were often surprised by the acute perception and intelligent questioning that they encountered. The also received written comments, and I have referred a few to Astron. How well the schools observed and thought about the play.

I told the way you had to look for double meanings!

"The empty looking chair at the end was a good symbol when it kept on rocking."

"Yelena broke her part when she tapped the electric plug was not typical of Yelena."

"I didn't like the fact that the appearance and props were in keeping with the period while the language the actors used was modern and crude mix."

I liked the similarity of the coat between Greta and Yelena (Yelena didn't see the friend ship with it up from the same girl). I disagreed with the interpretation of Yelena's character, because I didn't see her as stupid but more of a thoughtless, complex character."

"The theatre was good as it seemed to bring more feelings and emotions from the actors to me, so that I felt as if I should nearly walk down on to the stage and become part of the whole story."

"There was a bit too much of libbing in places they tended to repeat themselves."

"The play doesn't really put theatre in the round, although it does give ideas to the characters."

"The ending was good because it is so different from your usual ending!"

"I didn't like the way it ended—it didn't feel as if there was anything more to it."

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Ballet

VISION AND

William Shoubridge on The Kinetic Energy Dance Company

I don't think anyone could give the importance of the amateur and semi-professional theatre groups that abound in this country, strewn about under the shadow of the vastly inflated major subsidised theatre companies like so many dog droppings.

These organisations are not so much in decline as they are performing plays that the larger companies wouldn't touch with a barge pole, but rather in creating a ground base of people interested in theatre and performing and thus creating a more deeply seated audience for those subsidised companies.

In dance, the picture isn't quite so rosy. Presumably any fool can walk on off the street, put on a costume and sit. But people who are willing to go in for the grueling years of training and daily rehearsal as well as the constant self-discipline to keep themselves in shape just to go into an amateur dance company for no financial remuneration, don't exist.

So what are you with amateur dance companies are collections of miserable half talents.

temper, overweight and wacky (the nearest a basic prerequisite for a good dancer).

The performance isn't entertaining and doesn't in the least live with the girls constantly falling off points and men usually apologising to the audience (I've seen it happen!), and the rarely outnumbered men looking more like misplaced footballers brought in only to bear the strain of lifting loads.

Really, it's enough to put one off dance for life.

As the other extreme we have the "avant-garde" universities and all groups, adopting "Graham technique", are they absolutely at classroom and stuffing their programmes with obscure more mystical poses, most often, and a plethora of fancy stage and lighting tricks guaranteed to induce fury and rage in the audience and.

So, it's with a huge then moderate leap of belief that I can make favourable mention of at least one group that has played recently in Sydney the Kinetic Energy Dance Company at the Sydney Centre.

The Kinetic Energy group is not totally anti-



The Phoenix and giant birds manipulated by eight dancers. "The score of percussion isn't."

MYTH

The Dance of Life Company

that you can see that from the grace and flow with which they dance. The dancers have all had some formal classical training, and they do get a small glimpse from the Australia Council—though not enough to have the group together as a continual contracted body.

But what is interesting is that they use both modern and classical technique, have merged them well, have a couple of choreographers of great potential, and have works of impressive scope and good design—including a couple with some playful and comical things to see about modern life.

One in particular, *Real Dance*, although it might induce smart comments from certain people, is a work that says it involves others if it really isn't just what it wants to say, has enough content to feed at least twice three other dance theatre pieces. It wants at you all a bare, impression sparking off many associations within the subject. The impact is compelling and dramatic.

One moment especially, when a group of people are going through a series of facial self-



Eugenie Knox and Rosalee in The Phoenix

checked concertina, with a curious but irrelevant reference to a background of a telephone ringing. *Groundswell*, suggests a whole community worried as it itself, totally oblivious of those around them, said even they not very happy with the things that life has given them.

The work then closed the programme of the Seymour Centre was *Perishable Memory*, inspired by Aboriginal bark paintings. One tends to dream in remembrance of things lost that, unable to alter the memory of the Australian Ballet's *Concerto II*, but this work effectively uses the shape and style of the paintings in its basic vocabulary, an *Arise* effort, for example, with leaders laid out on the floor, arms and legs slumped as if waiting on the director's title.

The work is concerned with basic rituals and survival (hunger and death), with ideal forms (stars, child birth and mating). It traverses the same ages of man and climaxes in the end with the entire company snaking together on the floor and returning to the opening steps of the bark paintings. *Perishable Memory* is an excellent, sensory and completely disintegrated piece of dance drama. It only goes to prove that if you look long enough you can find strength and wealth of material and grandeur amidst the mark of the "primitive" dance.

Two other that the Dance Of Life Company

also recently seen at the Seymour Centre, is another unfortunate example of that mark. The work of the fellow Australian choreographer, Eugene Knox, obviously has a more interesting content in clothes and real sense of spectacle with than in creative dance's capacity for intelligent depth.

The Phoenix is one of these heavy old myths that have been reshaped by multitudes of artists yet unremoved from its old traditions. I do wish they would leave it alone. It is a grand, simple and beautiful myth in which right and justice are because of their simplicity. These are the myth as Mrs. Knox has said it depicts our puritans like *Man is our Father and Purified*, "Life is Unreachable" and other phrases of the Love/Peace/Happiness/Goodness set.

There was only one moment that was worthwhile, and that was the slow progression of an old woman with a walking stick across the stage in a thin corridor of light towards her ever decreasing shadow. But then was soon lost in the softer of music, slats, light and costumes being and being.

We've all read Herman Hesse, Rabel Gable, Gensberg, The Hobbit and so, and I've always harboured a little fear that soon we'd see some sort of chorvova, simple snaked out Lindsay Kemp theatrical popper out of it all. This is a



Opera

The Ensemble Pro

David Gyger

Carlo Felice Cillario, who served a brief term as musical director of the Australian Opera—its first ever—in 1969-71, suddenly turned this summer into something of a cult figure for audiences at the Sydney Opera House. Whereas critics have been divided in their assessment of the artistic merits of some of the work of the current musical director, Richard Boyage, not to mention his predecessor, Edward Downes, scarcely an unusual word has been uttered over the years about Cillario.

Particularly during the past couple of years, he has been consistently passing well above average performance levels the orchestral musicians under his command, ensuring them time after time to meet their own ever rising standards. The first and most obvious evidence of this would be seen right from the first performance of the A.O.'s concert hall *Aida* in January 1971, when the Elizabethan Sydney Orchestra arranged for the best time kept the substitution of the orchestra's first opera theatre to play at the unqualified musical splendours of the concert hall, to musical straight and unimpeded due to the demands of the score.

The vocal wonder at Tom Lippincott's designs for *Aida* has dimmed a little, after three successive seasons have been swung out of aim and coherence, originally intended for one year's experimental use only. But the vocal wonder of the concert hall *Aida* has increased in coherence and shape while have gradually absorbed more and more of the substitution of the *Aida* score under the continuing presence of Cillario—who has so far conducted every performance of the production. Back up and down as there has been have been passed mostly by the side and those of the orchestra of voices who have passed the *Aida* over those three seasons.

But this year, Cillario's talents have been spread much more widely, and to great effect during the summer holiday season just concluded he not only conducted all the *Aida*s, but two of the three Puccini operas as they stream through the 1973 Sydney summer season's Puccini festival. Both he revised *Tosca* and his new *Madama Butterfly* were exciting.

Presumably, as the only preview of a new production, the *Butterfly* premiere was the supreme highlight of the 1973 summer season. The unique vocal triangle of opening night was the running debut of a marvelously talented American soprano, Leona Mitchell, in the title role, and the brilliant success of Puccini Cillario shared from the orchestra. Somehow these triangle, make a story almost like a puzzle to point out that there were indeed three—some of the supporting performances, some in John Copley's production.

I had been as much of the quality of Mitchell's voice as witness to her extended portrayal of Lisa in Louis Murrell's premiere, certainly recording of George Gershwin's *Blue* and Lisa could make me, but it was quite clear before Mitchell was gone on stage in *Butterfly* that she was going to be a good deal more impressive in the first than any more recording could make her seem (she lived off beautifully over the old stage show without a

trial of the harmony that sometimes marred her). To Mitchell's singing, last year, and she related the kind of reference that could hardly fail to involve all but the most hardened member of the audience in the unfolding drama. She was a musical *Butterfly*, raised almost to the point of consciousness at the start, yet then going into a state of an instant that she was capable of the necessary of love and the strength of character, that could her finally to bloody sacrifice nation.

Henry Randen's sets are usually traditional and very attractive. Michael Bennett's costume designs are excellent, colourfully. Cillario and Downes' Western is repeated—particularly those for the American ladies, whose height is emphasized by covering him which force him to stoop to enter the Japanese house. The lighting attributed jointly to Roger Bennett and Copley, is superb—particularly the transitions from day to night to dawn toward the end of Act II, where *Butterfly* and *Scarpia* are reduced to silhouette in marvellous visual economy of the evening display that is written into the score as the usually ethereal flowering shows comes and goes.

Copley's production ended only in introducing the American ladies gradually into the final act, and in replacing *Butterfly* to small implausibly half way across the stage after usually dismembering herself, to open the door for Puccini's *Scarpia* dying postures in the it able to make should be directed instead, as the score explicitly requests, toward little *Tosca* and not his heavenly father.

Landscape: Puccini's Puccini was nothing short of a personal using triumph (his directing triumph for Copley as well, who is always worked very hard with him as great effect), but Puccini's Puccini's portrayal of the score was in the score was equally effective in making a little more, more directly immediate why—when it was marked by a line of the awkward mannerism that Puccini unconsciously, from time to time that he is Gaudy Puccini's son and a real chap if he did look.

Richard Harold Macgregor, who John Pople was right in *Shanties*, Macgregor looking vocal power and Pople looking dramatic resolve. Janelle Macgregor was an excellent *Scarpia*, but breaking completely free from the mannerisms of *Scarpia* in *The Marriage of Figaro* that have rendered it so conspicuously and too much of her debut work in recent years.

The Puccini team—Cillario, Cillario and the title role, Puccini (Pople) (Cillario) and John (Pople) (Cillario) was just as effective in the Puccini melodrama as it had been young earlier in the season, in Verdi's *Aida*, and with all the richness of Stephen Hall's original production reworked for David Hall's new work, it all added up to a gripping night in the theatre.

Everyone was in fact, even the vocalists. Cillario had the orchestra working and singing in unbroken passion suitable to the intense intensity of the score, which is at the absolute opposite end of the Puccini spectrum from *Butterfly*. The stars of Act II have been made dramatic in looking with its dramatic significance. *Tosca* and *Scarpia* no longer show what effect would the end of Act II as if they are



Andrea Bonaventura in Puccini

ncipals

some characters is a short film of the 28-year-old in the secret door to the bathroom chamber no longer features calling on the furniture-finders. Christodoulou is no longer tied to the stake before being shot in Act III, and is allowed to scramble to the ground as he cowers though Toulou's upward flight through a phantasm of soldiers who merely stand transfixed and watch her pass by is no more convincing now than it was in the first place, reducing the final disavowal to a bit of a joke.

Copley's 1973 production of Molière's *Mephistopheles* includes a good bit of the original magic this time round, though it was marked by stunning improvisation in Molière's *Don Quixote* of the Night, which is now far and away the best ever heard in this production. Howard Macgregor's Papageno remained as fresh as ever, on opening night, but faded. Boykman's Pamina seemed a little further than before. Robert Garth's Tamino was a little less worldly-wise in his role, Neil Warner-Smith's Speaker superb, Green Jackson's Sarastro disappointingly under-powered. Ronald Quaid took over impressively from Ron Stevens in the last part of the first season's run.

The last production of the summer season was William Shakespeare's *La Tragedy*, also reproduced like Toulou by David Ford, mostly to great effect. Both men were excellent, but the individual himself was Robert Alderman's Meroch. It may seem odd to single out Meroch for special mention, but, in creating the character, Alderman goes again indeed, just how verbal is an actor he is as well as when a tremendous actor is a singer. He showed with the best of them, but was wholly credible when he turned serious, it was a new drama, not just a general old purpose. Alderman throws into a different costume as a different stage setting. The composition of his final "Sonnet" in *La Tragedy*, which is about to discover that love has died and the embrace that accompanied it was absolutely right and helped greatly to make the last few moments of the scene the shattering dramatic experience they ought to be.

Alderman was asked to embody the absolutely superb Meroch of *La Tragedy*. Impassioned, flamboyant, provocative, compassionate in the most of his Meroch, in Act II, he came right through the house down. Both parts of Meroch were ideal by the multi-cast company of Alan Light (Lafayette), and William Smith (Lafayette) and Gregory Vasilakis (Schwarz). One could not miss the feeling that the four Merochs were really enjoying the home in front of Act I and Act IV, and subsequently by the parties of Meroch's tender embraces and, finally, his death was enhanced greatly.

On each of the three occasions I saw her, Joan Graham's Meroch started off too weak, quickly, and left me unimpressed after Act I, but each time she was quite marvellous after that. We had a little more weight in Act I, though I demanded by the company written into the scene, which admittedly continued to a large extent the scene as a physically final link from the start of the scene—the will be a thoroughly convincing scene.

Both Rodolfo was personal moments. Lambertus Purlan, the opening line, carrying on the dramatic and vocal transformation from



Laura Mitchell in *Die Geheime*, Lambertus Purlan as Purlan in *Molière's Butterfly*. Photo: Bill Moxley

shadowed by his Purlan. Anon Anon even more spectacularly successful, and correspondingly more appreciated by the audience, singing his better than I have heard him before and also his two episodes of stage drama. Both Purlan and Anon have the same, almost perfect, to make them thoroughly credible in the role, and there was very little between the overall quality of their performance. Purlan looked a little power at times, but for two episodes, "Bitter" at the very end and the ultimate moment of the deeply, perhaps, then, Anon's first act was his more satisfying, he ending a little less convincing.

There was nothing or really wrong with John Purlan's Meroch, but it lacked the full measure of his vocal dramatic commitment. It was a mistake to cast Elizabeth Fennell as Meroch, but she made a creditable job of it.

Finally, though, all these Merochs had to do their own work of emotional maturity that is only satisfying to see emerging in one of the oldest productions still in the repertoire of the Australian Opera Company in 1970. It was the whole production has matured in the same way that John Copley's 1971 Purlan matured, only more so—for the Purlan was excellent to stand

with, whereas the Meroch was excellent or more.

Increasingly, from season to season, the A.O. is growing that opera's excitement will not be limited solely by time and length productions, or the reputation of individual new stars. Examples still exist, perhaps more than any other still, and the A.O. is winning its greatest triumph through exploration of that very fact. One or two men played down in the middle of a cut-off the full or some resident company, the more they played away to anyone who's around and is reasonably competent, domestic and perhaps a production is the point of risk and a complete breakdown in dramatic predictability.

The last piece of the *Flora* is greatly embraced when you can have a Ronald Quaid playing the first episode of a Carmen when you can have Purlan and Meroch played by a Purlan and a Purlan, at a distance when you can have Meroch of the culture of William Smith and Purlan and Meroch in the culture of Alan Light. This is such an exciting time it is astonishing to many of the world's big titles when companies seem to feel no qualms about ignoring it completely.



AUSTRALIAN CENTRE— INTERNATIONAL THEATRE INSTITUTE

WORLD THEATRE DAY

The following is an extract from the International Message, written by the President of the ITI, M° Rado Balgoun.

"It is unfortunate that theatre gave human dignity its first testimony, a testimony which in its struggle against violence and oppression, in its individual (inadequacy) and unity, can be perceived by no one.

It is not however the theatre, first among all other arts, recognised and valued means of communication, understood where they come from, what drove them, and through process and suffering affirmed man's, brought equilibrium to the world.

It is well-known that theatre ought man to face himself honestly, with infinite certainty, is confined to itself and assume responsibility for himself, it ought him to liberate and rise to what he ought to be rather than how he has been held to be, to assist in truthfully turn reality through emotion, and flow into man's life as an artistic element.

And theatre has privilege. A privilege enabling people to open themselves and to another and share dreams of a just and better world."

17TH BIENNIAL ITS CONGRESS IN 1977

The Swedish Centre of the ITI has set its first biennial in relation to the seventeenth Congress of the International Theatre Institute to be held in Stockholm from July 21 to 30 June 1977, 1977.

Meetings will take place in the Stadsteatern, Mobergska Torg 3 116-40 Stockholm, it could also take place in the 1970s.

There is a working committee of the Congress: Group of Assembly
Third World Theatre
Group of Actors
Theatrical Theatre
Dance and Pantomime
New Theatre

In accordance with the statutes of ITI, the working languages are English and French and preliminary working documents will be issued and all proceedings published simultaneously in these languages. The final theme of the Congress is "Interaction of national and international theatre cultures" and "Interaction of national and international theatre cultures" and "Interaction of national and international theatre cultures".

All the Stockholm and some Swedish and companies will give performances during the Congress and all participants will have free tickets. On the evening of 30 June, a performance of *The Children of Poppea* by Monteverdi will take place in the Dramatiska teatern, the famous eighteenth century court theatre where original sets will survive.

An exhibition will be arranged of items that participants may wish to bring with them in order to put information about theatre in their countries, such as music, dolls, costumes, props, masks, instruments etc, and there will be food from their country to share with all who

One of the social occasions will be a 'Midnight Sun Adventure' from 630 miles to Kiruna, the capital of Lapland, the far north of Sweden after which you will be awarded a certificate and being able to have flown across the Arctic Circle.

Angers, interested in attending the Congress should receive a copy of the booking form for the Malmsten Hotel and the preliminary programme from the office.

COMMITTEE OF THE NEW THEATRE

Following the 1975 ITI Conference in Berlin, France was entrusted with the establishment of the Committee of the Committee of the New Theatre, created only by Peter Jungs, Author producer. Jean Michel Sabatier received the mandate to create the meeting of the Committee, with a standing committee of young creators and theatre workers engaged in various fields of theatrical activities.

The term 'New Theatre' includes "every possible kind of theatre: experimental theatre, the theatre of research at creation, contemporary theatre, cultural minority theatre, men's or women's theatre, laboratory or body theatre etc."

The standing committee produced its first newsletter in January 1977 with letters and information from new theatre groups all over the world including a letter from John Tynan of the Australian Performing Group. The purpose of the newsletter is to ensure a link between companies and groups of the New Theatre, to exchange precise factual information (theatre of production, programming, schedules, touring plans etc), to provide independent, quickly and accurate information. The committee hopes to produce a quarterly publication but is totally dependent on volunteers to receive.

So any New Theatre group wishing to receive the newsletter or have information provided should write to the Secretariat du Comité du Nouveau Théâtre, 7, rue de la Harpe 75005 Paris.

AUSTRALIAN ELIZABETHAN THEATRE TRUST WORLD TOUR

There are still places left for a special Tour of ballet, opera and musical theatre arranged by Shirley Hay. The 30 day tour from 20th April to 18th July will take in periods of North London, Europe and Hong Kong. Theatre tours will see the best of drama, ballet and opera as well as time for sightseeing. The tour to London is timed to coincide with the Queen's Silver Jubilee Celebrations. Cost is \$3,400 for a shared room. For further information contact Cheryl Cahill on 263-1200 or Shirley Hay directly on 448-7075 (telex).

PLAYSCRIPTS

The Hague Centre of the ITI has begun the publication and distribution of manuscripts of foreign plays in English translation.

Up to 10 new Australian Centre has received live plays. Copyright by the East German playwright Peter Hacks. Manuscript by the Dutch dramatist Gerold Lammert.

Photo Playwright's Manager Leon by Vito Han from Poland.

A Night's Talk by Kunguril Chavala from Poland.

Chorizo La Car by Jean Chavala from Hungary which is translated into French only. If you are interested in the production of these plays please contact this office.

SEMINAR: THE THEATRE IN BRITAIN

The Professional Academic Regional Study Seminar in association with The Central Bureau for Education Visits and Exchanges will hold an International Seminar Seminar for academics, advanced students and those with a special interest in the theatre, entitled 'The Theatre in Britain', from 10-15th July 1976 at New House, 53 Grosvenor Road, London, SW7.

ENGLISH-LANGUAGE SWEDISH THEATRE DICTIONARY

The Nordic Theatre Union, Stockholm, is planning to issue a new, expanded edition of its international dictionary, THEATRE MOCHOS. The first edition, published in 1976 played to be a practical tool in theatre work, especially in connection with touring companies, visiting professionals, and theatre conferences. The volume includes 824 theatrical, artistic, and administrative words and phrases, most of them illustrated with drawings. The first edition included the two Scandinavian languages and English.

The new edition, scheduled for publication in the spring of 1977, will be supplemented with translations into French and German, thus becoming an eight-language dictionary. The estimated price is \$16, plus postage and handling. To estimate the number of copies likely to meet the Nordic Theatre Union is interested in hearing from potential subscribers to this second edition. Please write to the Nordic Theatre Union, Eriksgatan 16 S-114 30 Stockholm Sweden, and state the number of copies you will require. Your letter is not binding, but it will be of great help to the publisher in determining the quantity of the printing. ("Theatre Mochos" published by the U.S. Center of the ITI Dec 1976).

VOICE OF AUSTRALIA

In December 1976 the West German Theatre monthly *Die Deutsche Bühne* received the European award of "Night of the Moon" by Patrick White, as produced at Hildesheim under the title "Night of the Moon".

Following the original, Australian premiere in 1964, the production became possible because the Hildesheim "Theaterhaus", Prof. Hildesheim, obtained the rights and the address Rindke Verlag, the theatre in Bonn.

Following that the author, born 1912 in New South Wales is a Nobel prize winner and has been called "the German Shakespeare" the reviewer positively analysed the play, writing that the text has symbolic significance as well as referring to the last play. Everyone who has on his own "The Moon"!

BOOKS

Helen van der Poorten

Bonus and The Fourth Wall, by Richard Brodhead, with The Quarterly, by Joseph Musgrave. Currency/Melburn Drama, January 1976.

Room and Allowed, by Alexander Buzz with The Western Banner, by Louise Breen. Currency/Melburn Drama, Sydney 1976.

From the place about *gillies* and open to Nick Lauchlan's prologue to Joseph Musgrave's *The Quarterly* to the direction 'Three parties by a gillie' in Richard Brodhead's *The Fourth Wall*, Currency's latest *Double* (or rather *single*) full plays are set to match suit. Considering the title and the fact that the editors have now chosen to place the notes and comment after rather than before the main texts, it is interesting that they continue to pursue a reader public with the sociological issues raised by each play.

In a recent collection of Brodhead's *Bonus* and *The Fourth Wall* as well as Musgrave's *The Quarterly*, the theoretical point of each play is conveyed through diagrams and commentaries not necessarily related to the play as it is. With Musgrave's play, for instance, we are given a detailed account of Sydney's 'Gilded Cage' of 1928—the incident which sugges-



tively shaped the play. Certainly these events have had some political, and in this case I think Currency's approach pays off, as we have a chance to contrast the playwright's *House* with the real life drama. The notes of Musgrave's *Quarterly* having to attend to a crying baby and other suburban preoccupations while holding the audience at bay, show us the objective nature qualities of the play which, when seen in its own country (this is a New Zealand). There is an interesting and touch of comedy when the stage production's girl friend who 'one does not see' is demonstrated but of one A.H. 2.10, and a thousand pounds of ammunition'. The package of the play, the historical background to the dramatized genre, and Nick Lauchlan's highly theoretical edition of comments in its entirety and I have my doubts, however, about



The value of the 1971 press and code of an *Expendable*. These production of the play, is it worth to tell us more about the context than the play.

Richard Brodhead's emotional and strongly personal camp *Bonus* seems to me less well served by the essay in context as a serious business. In spite of the Currency's comments of the play (it is set in the home of Mr and Mrs Dewart, who are upset when their son Charlie brings home a gillie as a fiancée) and the social implications. It is so plainly an uncomfortable piece which sits and looks four companies should stand up if they have already done so, that I fear the 'context' comments might neutralize the perspective. I thought the place of Sydney, Breen et al in *Bonus* after's *Concept to Drama?* made the point quite adequately and although Currency is a

worth writing about the current use of *laughter*, but there is so much else in the book to tell us that this might not be the place for it. Of course the very essence of *The Fourth Wall*, in which the actors (or are they audience?) bar-code that will spend possible (distortion) does raise theoretical issues as well as *laughter*.

The other two double bill—Breen's *Room and Allowed* and Louise Breen's *The Western Banner*—are also packed with comment, much of it at the time on urban Australian language.

Presiding in a Professor R. D. Laing's article on the language in the plays, I am again inclined to wonder what *laughter* the editors hope to appeal to with this introduction. The Breen plays, in print for the second time with Currency, is such a well known contemporary drama that such evaluation might be superfluous, but Breen, perhaps the best-known Australian playwright, is so little known in the 1970's that more theoretical discussion beyond that in the last volume at the end of the book might have helped spread his reputation.

But an collection of all my readings simply reflect the fact that prospective performers of these playbilled plays might not see the appeal for the time. The plays themselves are of a superbly readable and Currency's support of less has been so prolific that they have probably reached the stage where they can support them at the stage for a reader reading public.

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